

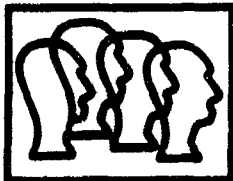
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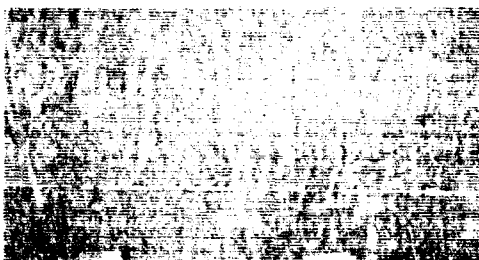
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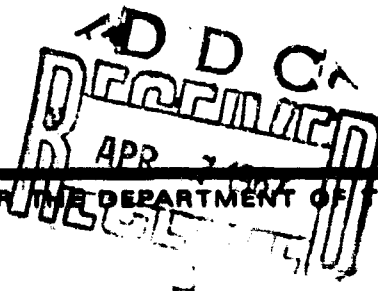
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CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE IN INTERNAL CONFLICT

Volume II
THE EXPERIENCE IN EUROPE
AND THE MIDDLE EAST

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CHALLENGE AND RESPONSE IN INTERNAL CONFLICT

Volume II THE EXPERIENCE IN EUROPE AND THE MIDDLE EAST

**by
D. M. Condit
Bert H. Cooper, Jr.
and Others**

March 1967

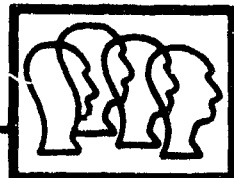
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S O C I A L S C I E N C E R E S E A R C H I N S T I T U T E



ABSTRACT

The present study is one of three volumes in a series entitled Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict. The series contains descriptive and analytical accounts covering a total of 57 cases of insurgency and counterinsurgency occurring in the 20th century. The three volumes are individually entitled The Experience in Asia (19 cases), The Experience in Europe and the Middle East (18 cases), and The Experience in Africa and Latin America (20 cases).

The purpose of the project was to enlarge the body of knowledge about insurgency and especially counterinsurgency by empirical study of actual historical cases. From a sample of about 150 cases, 57 were selected according to criteria governing time, definition, occurrence of military operations, analogy, and feasibility. Persons of academic and professional background were then selected to study individual cases according to a standardized methodology (described in the Technical Appendix).

The individual studies were written in a format covering background, insurgency, counterinsurgency, and outcome and conclusions, followed by notes and bibliographic material. The studies have been grouped geographically in three volumes to form casebooks on the subject of internal conflict. In addition, the cases now published plus some further materials collected during their preparation form a data bank for the further analysis of insurgency and counterinsurgency.

Research and writing were
completed in November 1965.

FOREWORD

In the period since World War II, U. S. policy makers and private citizens alike have become increasingly aware of the serious threat to world peace that has been posed by insurgency. This is a complex threat that is imperfectly comprehended. CRESS is making a continuing effort to address itself to this subject in a number of ways; and the study that follows represents one approach to gaining an understanding of the threat.

The present volume is one of three representing 57 separate case studies of internal conflict situations occurring in the 20th century. Of the total cases studied, 17 experiences predated World War II, 11 occurred during World War II, and 29 took place between 1945 and 1965. The locale for 19 of the cases was Asia; for 12, Europe; for 6, the Middle East; for 11, Africa; and for 9, Latin America. The governmental force involved in containing or combating the insurgency also varied: In 16 cases an indigenous government composed of local people fought the insurgents; in 21 cases, it was a foreign authority operating in a colonial role; and in 20 cases, it was a foreign authority operating in an occupying or intervening role.

The large number and variety of cases of internal conflict were each analyzed according to a common methodology. The methodology was framed so as to emphasize the important relationships between military, political, economic, and sociological factors. Thus, these cases are not merely studies of military strategies or tactics in and of themselves, but of strategies and tactics assumed and implemented within the living and untidy complexity of their situational environments.

The importance of these data, from a research point of view, is considerable and obvious. The findings in these casebooks and additional information will now enable us to perform comparative analyses. We thus hope to identify, refine, and present for further research attention some principles that will make possible improved ways of dealing with internal conflict.

It is our belief that the cases will introduce the reader to the wide variety of guises that internal conflict assumes, the broad range of responses that it provokes, and its extensive and pervasive ramifications.

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In a project as large as this, many persons have played important roles. Although it is impossible to acknowledge the contributions of everyone, certain major efforts should be cited.

The research design was reviewed by both in-house and outside experts. Their comments and suggestions were of considerable assistance in detecting and overcoming methodological problems. Foremost among these was Dr. Theodore R. Vallance, who was Director of the Center for Research in Social Systems until November 1966 and who also acted as division chairman for this project during most of its life. Valuable advice and comments were also supplied by Dr. Earl DeLong, Dr. Ritchie P. Lowry, Dr. William A. Lybrand, Dr. Philip Sperling, Dr. Herbert H. Vreeland, and Dr. Charles Windle.

Among the external reviewers of the methodology were Professor Paul M. A. Linebarger of the School of Advanced International Studies of The Johns Hopkins University, Professor Rudolph J. Rummell of Yale University, and Professor Abdul Aziz Said of The American University. Professor Bernard B. Fall was one of the original testers of the methodology and made a number of helpful suggestions. Professor Alphonso Castagno of Boston University, Professor Ralph Powell of The American University, Mrs. Helen Kitchen, editor of Africa Report, and Professor Frank Trager of New York University were especially helpful in suggesting names of persons who might be able to undertake work on the cases in this series. In this connection, we must also gratefully acknowledge the assistance of our authors, who almost without exception helped by suggesting other possible contributors. Many others, too numerous to mention, gave the same kind of aid and assistance.

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INTRODUCTION

The publication of this three-volume series, Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict, marks the conclusion of work on the first phase of a study exploring the response of governments to the challenge of insurgent violence. Volume I contains studies of 19 cases reflecting The Experience in Asia; Volume II comprises 18 cases concerning The Experience in Europe and the Middle East; and Volume III, with 20 cases, describes The Experience in Africa and Latin America. Although the 57 cases occurred over a wide range of geographic areas and under a variety of social, economic, and political systems, in every instance the threat to the existence of the government in power was such that military forces were involved in maintaining or restoring order within the area.

PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF STUDY

The purpose of this study, performed under U. S. army aegis, was, in the broadest sense, to learn and profit from the past. Although the army in the early 1960's was directly or indirectly engaged in checking insurgency in various countries, notably in South Viet-Nam, there was no institutional memory bank upon which it could call to review either its own experience or that of other armies. The experience of experts was available, but even here there were difficulties. Not only did time tend to blur memories, but even when precise data were available, they could not always be correctly extrapolated to fit another case. When this study was begun in early 1963, comparative analysis of counterinsurgency was impossible on a broad scale: There were neither a sufficient number of studies nor a sufficient degree of analogy between those that had been done. Furthermore, earlier work had focused mainly on underground and insurgent operations* rather than on the counteractivities of government. Three specific purposes thus emerged: to focus on governmental response to counterinsurgency, to enlarge the number of cases under study, and to provide for comparability of data so as to broaden the base for future analysis.

* See, for example, such studies as Case Study in Guerrilla War—Greece During World War II (published in 1961), Casebook on Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: 23 Summary Accounts (1962), Case Studies in Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: Algeria 1954-1962 (1963), Case Studies in Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: Cuba 1953-1959 (1963), Case Studies in Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: Vietnam 1941-1954 (1964), Case Studies in Insurgency and Revolutionary Warfare: Guatemala 1944-1954 (1964), and Undergrounds in Insurgent, Revolutionary, and Resistance Warfare (1963). All these studies were published by the Special Operations Research Office, predecessor of the present Center.

The project was planned as a three-phase study. The aim of the first phase of the work, which culminates in publication of the three volumes in the present series, was to identify counterinsurgency campaigns, to select from the total body of known cases those most useful for study, to analyze individually each selected case according to a standardized methodology, and to prepare case studies. In the second phase of the work, the data will be utilized to analyze on a comparative basis the strategic factors that operated in insurgency-counterinsurgency situations and to identify those tactical factors that were critical to the outcome of each case. The third phase of the work will be to study and analyze those specific tactical factors identified as critical—such possible tactics as resettlement, border control, jungle fighting, or treatment of captured and surrendered guerrillas.

The 57 case studies that constitute the first phase of this work are intended to present the reader with a broad overview of the major strategic and tactical factors bearing on each specific situation and to indicate some of the complexity of interplay between, for example, economic and sociological, political and military factors. There has been no attempt to probe intensively and in depth any specific component of a given campaign. Rather, the purpose has been to provide a point of first contact in the study of internal conflict situations.

The casebooks as presented bring together in ordered and coherent form a mass of formerly uncoordinated and fragmented data. From the research viewpoint, the series provides a data base for further study and analysis. From the military viewpoint, the studies should prove useful in instruction and orientation, as background for policy papers and contingency plans, and as a basis for the development of doctrine. From a still larger and less specifically utilitarian viewpoint, these volumes may also help in the continuing work of comprehending and assessing the role of the military in the critical area of governmental response to the challenge of internal conflict.

A MEANING OF "COUNTERINSURGENCY"

The initial research problem was to define the elements involved in the governmental response, or counterinsurgency, in terms that would have validity from both operational and research viewpoints. The problem was partly semantic in nature. Webster defined neither "governmental response" nor "counterinsurgency," but the meaning of the latter could presumably be derived by juxtaposing "counter," meaning "against," and "insurgency," meaning in international law "a revolt against a government not reaching the proportions of an organized revolution, and not recognized as belligerency." This definition left much to be desired insofar as the research project was concerned.

The word "counterinsurgency" was, indeed, fairly new in U. S. military usage, having been coined some time after 1958* to give coherence and meaning to actions in which U. S. military forces were becoming increasingly involved. In the February 1962 edition of military definitions published by The Joint Chiefs of Staff, counterinsurgency was defined as "the entire scope of actions (military, police, political, economic, psychological, etc.) taken by or in conjunction with the existing government of a nation to counteract, contain, or defeat an insurgency."† This definition was in effect when work on this project started.

This broad definition still left some questions unresolved. For example, what constituted an "insurgency"? What was a counterinsurgent government? On what particular actions within the "entire scope of actions" should the study be focused? To clarify these difficulties, it may be well to explain some of the research interpretations that were placed upon the official definition.

What Constituted "Insurgency"?

Concerning the matter of insurgency, it was difficult to define the criteria that distinguished it. In the view of some students, insurgents had to possess an organization, use illegal methods, and advocate a political program; lacking such characteristics, practitioners of violence remained simply badmen, terrorists, or bandits. But since the first two criteria, organization and use of illegal methods, were not limited to insurgents and indeed were common among bandits and terrorists, they did not distinguish insurgency. In the case of the third criterion, possession of a political program, the study planners believed that this was irrelevant from the point of view of the counterinsurgent government.

Did it really matter to a government whether it would be overthrown by violent persons with a political program or by violent persons without a political program? In the latter event, would not the result be political anarchy, or, in the functional sense, another type of political system? More usually, of course, and so-called nonpolitical insurgents who approached victory suddenly, discovered or found thrust upon them a political program. In any event, from the point of view of the government, what counted was not the political change that would result after its downfall so much as the immediate threat to its existence.

*The word did not appear in the March 1958 edition of the Dictionary of United States Military Terms for Joint Usage.

†U. S. JCS, Dictionary of United States Military Terms for Joint Usage (JCE Pub 1; Washington: The Joint Chiefs of Staff, February 1962), p. 58. Newer terms currently replace the word "counterinsurgency" in military usage—for example, "stability operations," which in turn was replaced by "internal defense/development." Once work on this study started, there was no attempt to keep up with the latest semantic developments since the study is concerned with probing the concepts and operations of the past rather than making policy for the future.

In this study, therefore, it was assumed that governmental reaction to internal violence, whether the latter was politically or nonpolitically motivated and programmed, was counterinsurgent in nature. Thus the critical element in an insurgency was defined as the threat that it presented to the viability of the government--i.e., its credibility, its legitimacy, its ability to function.

What Was a Counterinsurgent Government?

Since, by the JCS definition, counterinsurgency included all actions "taken by or in conjunction with the existing government," a counterinsurgent government might be either an indigenous regime or a foreign power in an occupying, colonial, or supporting role. Although questions of legality might color the definition of a counterinsurgent government, for the researcher the test had to be that of function.

For example, the question of legality was important in those cases which occurred during World War II. In these instances, the legally constituted prewar governments of the Nazi-invaded and -occupied nations of Europe existed in exile, recognized by the Allied Powers, while puppet governments were formed within the occupied nations to carry on the administration of the country under the Axis occupation. But since the puppet governments actually performed the role of governing, they were regarded, for purposes of this study, as counterinsurgents when acting against resistance forces organized within their countries. Furthermore, the occupying powers within such countries, acting against resistance forces either alone or in conjunction with the puppet governments, also functioned as counterinsurgents.

For the purposes of this research project both the legal problems inherent in the concurrent existence of governments-in-exile and the absence of foreign aggression were thus disregarded. The institutions and forces that functioned as the de facto government of a country were held to qualify as counterinsurgent, both by function and by role.

What Was the Study Focus?

A third consideration involved the matter of emphasis within a study whose subject by definition embraced "the entire scope of actions (military, police, political, economic, psychological, etc.). . . ." The occurrence of insurgency within a state indeed suggested a society in turmoil, in which a significant number of the people were in revolt, and in which every counterinsurgent action might operate to influence and to be influenced by every part of the society, in a continuous circle of interaction. Measures taken on the economic level could affect political decisions which then influenced military actions. Conversely, military actions affected other spheres. Even the bearing and discipline of troops, let alone the orders of the troop commander, produced important changes in the climate of acceptance or non-acceptance of the governmental response. Life for the military counterinsurgent became a series of interfaces between the many overlapping

phases of the total endeavor, in which it was difficult to determine cause and effect or to separate the purely military from the purely political or purely economic.

In research, as in life, it was difficult, if not impossible, to divide the counterinsurgency effort into entirely separate spheres. Despite this, it was the intent and endeavor of this project to emphasize the military aspect of counterinsurgency even while attempting to indicate its relationship to political, economic, and social causes and effects. Thus, whatever the implied equality of emphasis in the JCS definition, the stress in this study was upon military aspects of "the entire scope of actions."

SOME ASSUMPTIONS UNDERLYING THE STUDY

Any definition or concept of insurgency and counterinsurgency presupposes a certain philosophical point of view about the role of government and governmental opposition and about the role of internal violence in a state. Some of the assumptions implicit and explicit within the terms of reference of this study should therefore be examined. Assumptions bearing on at least three important aspects of the subject need some clarification: the matter of morality, the matter of role reversal, and the matter of preventive counterinsurgency.

A Research View of the Morality of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency

When this study began, there were persons for whom the word "counterinsurgency" had (and may still have) moral overtones. To some, counterinsurgency seemed a "good" thing, done by "good" governments, with the "good" objectives of alleviating grievances and implementing desirable change while obviating undue violence and the chance of undesirable political results. They were able to hold this view, it should be noted, only by semantic juggling: The same actions, when taken by a "bad" government, became something other than counterinsurgency.

To others who considered the subject, counterinsurgency had an image ranging from "unwise" to "bad." Implicitly, these persons appeared to accept all insurgency as basically "good."

From the research viewpoint, danger seemed to lurk in both views. The view that counterinsurgency is "good"—and the concomitant refusal to call a function by its name when it is performed by a disliked institution or government—certainly seemed to circumscribe and distort one's perception of reality. On the other hand, the view that counterinsurgency is "bad" per se seemed to imply a roseate and unrealistic view of insurgency and to deny to government the pragmatic and functional requisite of self-preservation. Further, to view counterinsurgency as either totally "good" or totally "bad" seemed to preclude the possibility that "good" governments might use "bad" measures, or that "bad" governments might sometimes use "good" ones. To speculate along a scale of "good" and "bad" appeared fruitless.

The position taken in this study was that counterinsurgency might be undertaken by either "good" or "bad" governments in an assorted mix of "good" and "bad" ways, and that—whatever

political or moral approval or opprobrium might accrue to the government in question--counterinsurgency, as a function of government, remained a proper subject for inquiry and study. The terms "insurgency" and "counterinsurgency" were therefore accepted in their operational and nonmoralistic sense--as descriptive words used to name a type of violent opposition to government and a generic function of government, with no implications of morality or immorality. In this view, counterinsurgent governments might be either good or bad, they might be of any political persuasion, and the insurgents they combat might or might not have just cause for rebellion.

Role Reversal: Semantics vs. Function

It would not be necessary to mention the matter of role reversal but for the fact that the public image of a successful rebel has so often become stereotyped that, even after an insurgent has assumed the reins of government, he is still viewed as an insurgent. The semantic problem involved in the failure to recognize the reversal of role from insurgent to counterinsurgent is complicated by Communist practice and doctrine, which have been loathe to give up the "population snatching" appeals of the insurgent line even after governmental power has been attained.*

Thus, for example, one could find references to Fidel Castro as a "revolutionary" long after his ascension to power in Cuba. Indeed, Prime Minister Castro speaks of himself as a revolutionist and of his government as revolutionary. Let no one think, however, that any further insurgency against the insurgents-turned-government will be tolerated; when Castro appeals to Cubans to follow his "revolution," this is no call to insurgency, but exactly the opposite. Nonetheless, Castro's image was to many still that of an insurgent leader long after his function within Cuba became that of counterinsurgent.

Not only do the insurgents-turned-government attempt to maintain the appeal of their "insurgent" status, but their enemies, the legitimists, often maintain the same fiction. Furthermore, international recognition of the new government often lags behind the reality of its existence. As a result, there is a tacit conspiracy of propaganda in which both the new government and its enemies attempt to maintain the idea that it is still the aspiring insurgent-revolutionist.

Whatever the values of such a position, it is, for the purposes of research, unreal and unrealistic. In the present study, the view has been taken that function is the test of insurgent and of counterinsurgent: When the insurgent has taken over the powers of government and is the only government functioning within the area of the country, he is no longer regarded as insurgent, but as counterinsurgent.

* For a description of this, see Chapter Four, "The U.S.S.R. (1917-1921)."

"Preventive" Counterinsurgency Not Studied

During the period of conceptualizing the study plan, note was taken of an early working definition of counterinsurgency which had included all "... activities directed toward preventing or suppressing..." insurgency against "a duly established government."*

The crucial word was "preventing," and the definition thus raised the specter of including "preventive" counterinsurgency in the study. The concept had had wide acceptance among many persons involved in the field. Indeed, in certain circles it was practically dogma that the insurgency most effectively controlled was that which was never allowed to occur. One could hardly argue the point. On the other hand, it left the problem of how to identify those cases so successfully managed that they never existed.

In its broadest sense, "preventive" counterinsurgency might well be viewed as all those steps taken to ensure institution and maintenance of good and popular government. But if every tax cut, to use a possible example, might be viewed as a "preventive" counterinsurgent measure, the result would be an almost infinite number of cases. Furthermore, how could it be established that an insurgency would inevitably have occurred if a given step, e.g., the tax cut, had not been taken? To identify cases of "preventive" counterinsurgency implied both judgmental infallibility and historical inevitability—to the first of which, the study planners could not lay claim; to the second of which, they did not subscribe.

As a result, no attempt has been made within this study to try to outguess history. In every case that was studied, insurgency did occur and military preparations to deal with it were made and carried out.

SELECTION OF CASES

Given the JCS definition, the study interpretations, and certain assumptions as an indispensable starting point, work began on the selection of cases to be studied. The first and most obvious task was to list possible cases so as to get an idea of the size of the work. But listing cases was not quite so simple as it appeared. By definition, of course, wars between sovereign states were automatically excluded. On the other hand, the JCS definition had not set a minimum or maximum for the scope of internal conflict in insurgency or counterinsurgency.

A Rough "Minimax" Scale of Violence

In creating a list of counterinsurgency cases, the study planners were forced to set a rough working scale for the minimum and maximum of governmental reaction that would be considered "counterinsurgency." Below the minimum, the governmental response was considered too weak

* Incl., "Terminology Relating to Cold War Activities," w/ltr, Secy of the Genl Staff, subj.: Terminology Relative to Cold War Activities, 19 Feb 62 (CS 312.7 (19 Feb 62)).

or short-lived to be studied fruitfully; above the maximum, the governmental response took on the characteristics of conventional warfare. Only those cases were considered in which the government clearly recognized the threat to its existence or in which the outbreak of armed conflict clearly demonstrated the threat, with or without governmental recognition. In this connection, the coup d'état was regarded as a case to be excluded from a study of counterinsurgency, since governmental response in this situation was usually minimal or even nonexistent. At the other extreme, counterinsurgency in which conventional warfare tactics predominated, as in the Spanish Civil War of the 1930's, seemed inappropriate for this study. Thus a kind of rough "minimax" scale was developed for deciding which cases to list.

Only 20th Century Cases Considered

For several reasons, the list was further confined to cases occurring in the 20th century. First, there already existed a number of studies on the 19th century experience. Moreover, the conditions underlying the earlier experiences were so remote from present-day terms of reference that it was felt little good could be derived from their study. The number of cases occurring between 1900 and 1939 was undoubtedly sufficient to clarify any significant differences imposed by the technological revolution that has taken place since the start of World War II.

Within the guidelines sketched above, the research planners therefore set about listing cases that might be studied. This was accomplished through in-house brainstorming, consultation with area experts, and some library research. At the time, when counterinsurgency was still being talked about in terms of eight or so cases, it seemed mildly surprising, and then somewhat amazing, that the list grew to 25, 50, then 100 and more cases, with the end nowhere in sight.

Emphasis on Military Operations

The large number of cases in the original list indicated a strong need for a further selection process. Four additional criteria were used to select from the unwieldy list those counterinsurgency cases that would yield the most useful results from a research standpoint.

The first criterion was based upon the assumption that the U. S. army's greatest interest lay in those instances where another army had been called upon to perform a major counterinsurgent role. Here the experience of the past certainly had the greatest analogy and pertinence to future campaigns in which the U. S. army might have to function. The first cases chosen from the list were therefore those in which military operations had lasted one year or more. About 87 percent of the cases finally selected fell within this category.

A second selection criterion was to take those cases in which major powers were involved, specifically where troops of the United States or the Soviet Union had been used in external counterinsurgency situations, as in the U. S. role in Lebanon and the U. S. S. R. role in Hungary. A third criterion was to take cases of particular interest to the army or of special value for research purposes. The second and third criteria accounted for about 13 percent of the cases.

A final and overriding criterion was to accept for study only those cases for which data were available in unclassified sources and for which qualified persons would agree to undertake the work. These requirements disqualified a number of otherwise acceptable cases.

In essence, the JCS definition, its interpretation, and certain assumptions underlying a specific concept of counterinsurgency determined the cases to be included in the long list of situations suitable for study. In turn, this list was narrowed by the imposition of additional criteria to determine those counterinsurgency cases that would yield the most useful research results. In the final process, 57 cases were selected for study. *

Alphabetical List of the 57 Cases

The cases included Algeria (1954-1962), Angola (1961 to 1965), Arabia (1916-1918), Burma (1942-1945), Burma (1948-1960), Cameroon (1955-1962), China (1898-1901), China (1927-1937), China (1937-1945), Colombia (1948-1958), Cuba (1906-1909), Cuba (1953-1959), Cyprus (1954-1958), Dominican Republic (1916-1924), East Germany (June 1953), Ethiopia (1937-1941), France (1940-1944), Greece (1942-1944), Greece (1946-1949), Haiti (1918-1920), Haiti (1958-1964), Hungary (October-November 1956), Indochina (1946-1954), Indonesia (1946-1949), Indonesia (1958-1961), Iraq (1961-1964), Ireland (1916-1921), Israel (1945-1948), Italy (1943-1945), Jammu and Kashmir (1947-1949), Kenya (1952-1960), Laos (1959-1962), Lebanon (1956), Madagascar (1947-1948), Malaya (1942-1945), Malaya (1948-1960), Mexico (1916-1917), Morocco (1921-1926), Nicaragua (1927-1933), Norway (1940-1945), Outer Mongolia (1919-1921), Palestine (1933-1939), Philippines (1899-1902), Philippines (1942-1945), Philippines (1946-1954), Poland (1939-1944), Portuguese Guinea (1959 to 1965), South Africa (1899-1902), South Africa (1961 to 1964), South Korea (1948-1954), South Viet-Nam (1956 to November 1963), South-West Africa (1904-1907), Tibet (1951-1960), U. S. S. R. (1917-1921), U. S. S. R. (1941-1944), Venezuela (1958-1963), and Yugoslavia (1941-1944).

D. M. Condit
Bert H. Cooper

* For a description of the research methodology used in this study, see the Technical Appendix.

Part One
EARLY CENTURY
EXPERIENCE

ARABIA (1916-1918)

IRELAND (1916-1921)

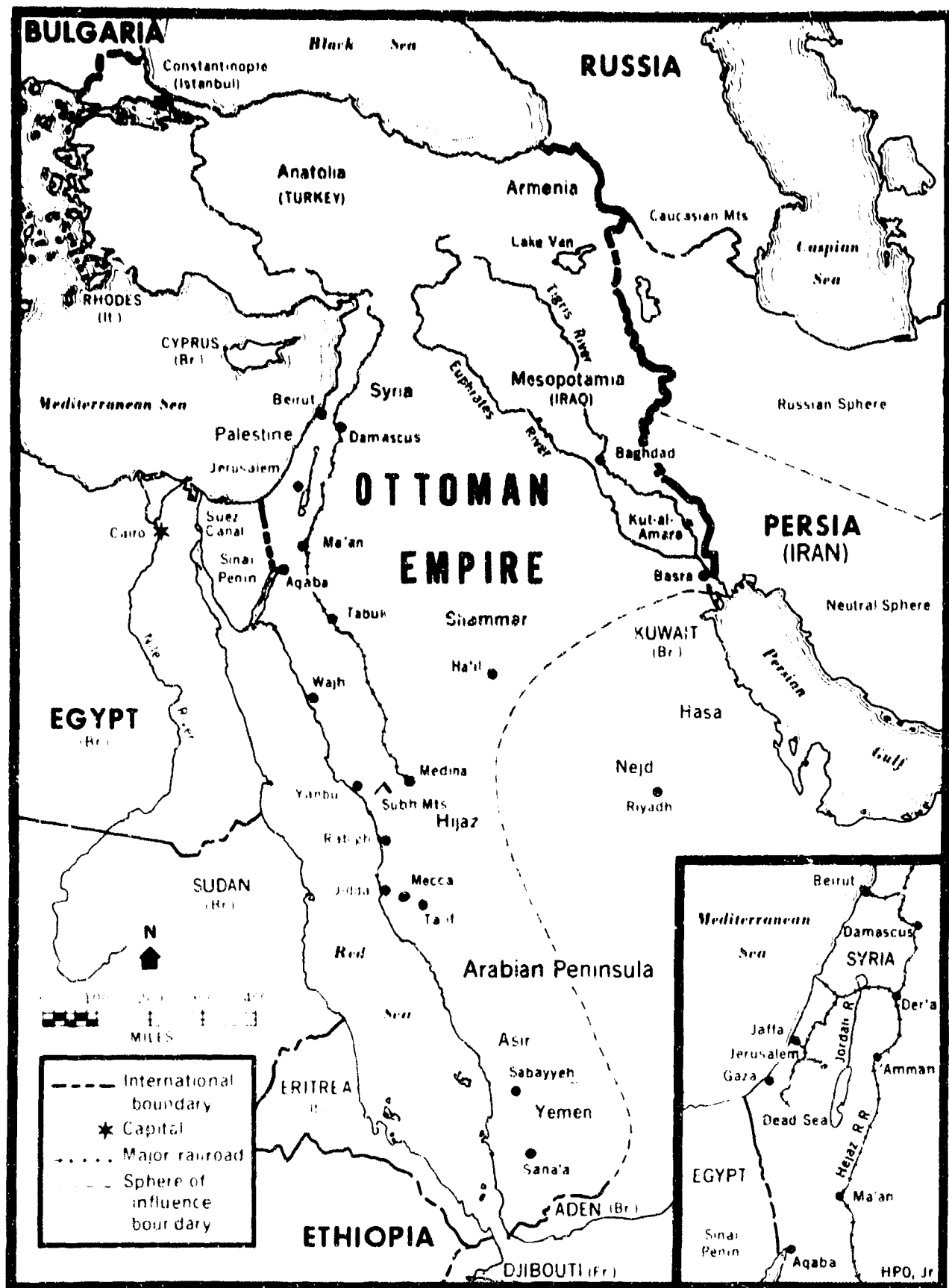
PALESTINE (1933-1939)

U.S.S.R. (1917-1921)

Chapter One

ARABIA 1916-1918

by Abdul Asis Said



OTTOMAN EMPIRE (1916-1918)

Chapter One

ARABIA (1916-1918)

by Abdul Aziz Suid

When Turkey joined the side of the Central Powers in World War I, the unhappy Arabs in the Ottoman Empire, after assurance of Allied aid, rebelled against the Turks. Tied down in the Hijaz by British and Arab troops and irregulars during the conflict, the Turks lost their Arab provinces in the postwar settlement.

BACKGROUND

The Arab revolt of 1916 has appeared highly symbolic in the eyes of Arab nationalists as the first concrete manifestation in modern times of their desire to re-create an independent and united Arab state. The insurgency arose—not in the land of the intellectuals of the Fertile Crescent*—but in the vast desert of Arabia, a region whose only claim to fertility, other than its scattered oases, rested on the ever-flowing springs of religious inspiration, which Allah chose to bestow upon the Prophet Muhammad more than thirteen hundred years ago. A synthesis of Syrian Arab nationalist aspiration, Hijaz Arab dynastic ambitions, and British strategic interests in World War I, the revolt was not to be an isolated cry in the depths of emptiness. It sparked a movement whose adherents crossed the desert, on camelback, and claimed the liberation of Damascus, the ancient center of Arabdom in the Fertile Crescent, from centuries of Turkish domination.

The Area of the Revolt

Although the revolt's influence extended throughout the Arabic-speaking world and its outcome directly affected the political status of the entire Arabian peninsula, as well as the Mesopotamian valley and eastern littoral of the Mediterranean, the Arab insurgency was operationally limited to the northwestern corner of Arabia, then known as al-Hijaz, and to the area of Jordan

*A semicircle of arable land stretching in a southeasterly direction from the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea to the Persian Gulf.

and Israel, then known as southern Syria or Palestine. For several centuries, both Hijaz and Syria had been part of the Ottoman (Turkish) Empire, along with Mesopotamia (Iraq) and various emirates in northern and western Arabia.

Nominally, Arabia was a part of the Ottoman Empire, but in actuality the southern and eastern sheikhdoms and emirates of Arabia were semi-independent territories under British influence. The British held the Protectorate of Aden at the southern tip of the peninsula; they also exercised a de facto protectorate over Egypt, although the Khedive of Egypt owed nominal allegiance to the Turkish Sultan in Constantinople (Istanbul) until late 1914. The British government of India had close ties with the Arab rulers of Kuwait, Oman, Hadhramaut and Nejd.

Never fully controlled by the Turks, the tribes of Arabia were chiefly concerned with their own dynastic rivalries and the control of oases. Religious differences among Islamic sects and conflicting interests of foreign powers, including the Turks, British, Italians, and Germans, made for instability in this vast, underpopulated, and loosely administered territory.

Turkish Administration and the Constitution of 1908

In the years before World War I, similar instability prevailed at the seat of Turkish power. After years of religious and governmental traditionalism, the "sick man of Europe," as the Ottoman Empire was called, had recently undergone some major operations in the hope of surviving in the modern world. Secularism had begun to replace Islamic sectarianism, and Turkish-oriented nationalism had been introduced into the multi-national and polyglot empire. Sultan Abdul-Hamid II, who came to power in 1876, was a reformer and a ruler of great personal ability; but after the turn of the century he found himself relying increasingly upon the traditional methods of Eastern despots--espionage, bribery, terrorism, and assassination. Aroused by Abdul-Hamid's tyranny, the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP)--a secret association of reform-minded, Western-educated "Young Turks"--instigated, on July 23, 1908, a military coup to force Abdul-Hamid to grant his subjects a constitution.

The constitution was greeted favorably by almost all ethnic groups and religious minorities in the empire and was looked upon as the embodiment of each faction's desires. In fact, however, the 1908 Constitution provided for a fusion of the different sects and races into an Ottoman democracy, whose distinctive culture and language was to be Turkish. During this period of popular jubilation and unguarded optimism, a group of "Young Arabs" attempted to further institutionalize their cooperation with the Young Turks by establishing, on September 2, 1908, a Society of Arab-Ottoman Fraternity, called in Arabic al-Ikha. Its goal was to defend the 1908 Constitution and promote the well-being of the Arab provinces on a basis equal with that of the Turkish provinces.

The period of jubilation was to be short-lived, however, for it soon became clear that the Turkish Committee's electoral measures did not reflect the ethnic composition of the empire. In 1908, the population of the empire (excluding Egypt) was about 22 million, of whom 10.5 million, or 48 percent, were Arabs and only 7.5 million, or 34 percent, were Turks, while some 4 million Europeans and other minorities constituted 18 percent.¹ When the Ottoman Parliament met in December 1908, only 60 of the 245 deputies were Arabs, while the Turks, with 160 seats, held a clear majority. In the Senate, where only 3 of the 40 senators were Arabs, the underrepresentation of the Arab majority was still more evident.

Arab Organizations Seek Redress of Grievances

Following an unsuccessful countercoup staged by supporters of the Sultan on March 31, 1909, al-Ikha was banned by the CUP regime, which accused the Arab society of encouraging Arab separatism and charged it with involvement in the abortive coup. After 1909, a number of Arab organizations in the Ottoman Empire and abroad prepared the ground for the Arab revolt of 1916. Some of these were legal and ostensibly nonpolitical, such as the Arab Literacy Club, which was organized in Constantinople in the summer of 1909. Another group was the Party of Decentralized Ottomanism, organized in Cairo in 1919 by Syrian and Lebanese emigrés. There were also more militant groups.²

A secret society, al-Qahtaniyah (Arab Society), was established towards the end of 1909 and included in its membership several Arab officers in the Ottoman army, as well as many prominent civilians. Bolder than most other groups, al-Qahtaniyah called for the creation of a single Arab kingdom comprising the Arab provinces of the empire. This Arab kingdom was to have its own parliament and local government, with Arabic as the official language, and it was to be linked with the Turks only through the Ottoman Sultan, who would wear, in addition to his own Turkish crown, the crown of the Arab kingdom.³

Another Arab nationalist society was al-'Ahd (The Covenant). Also favoring a dual monarchy for Arabs and Turks, the objectives and programs of al-'Ahd were similar to those of al-Qahtaniyah. Membership in al-'Ahd was restricted mainly to army officers, however, and its secrecy was more highly guarded—so well guarded, in fact, that it is not known exactly when this society was established in the period between 1912 and 1914. One of its founders was Aziz Ali, an Egyptian Arab staff officer in the Ottoman army, who had taken part in the CUP coup of 1908.⁴

Of these various secret and militant organizations, the most important was al-Fatat (Youth), which sought to obtain Arab independence within a modified Turk-Arab empire, rather than to break away entirely from the Ottoman Empire. Al-Fatat was founded in Paris on November 14, 1909, by a group of Arab students; its center was shifted to Beirut in 1913 and in 1914 to Damascus. Practicing a rigid recruitment policy, al-Fatat members were characterized by devotion of the highest order.⁵

With these societies all clamoring for more recognition of Arab rights, the prewar years were hardly tranquil in the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire. In February 1913, when the Society of Reform—a "national" body drawn from all creeds in Syria and Lebanon—published a proposal calling for administrative decentralization and more local autonomy in the Arab parts of the empire, the CUP regime retaliated by arresting many Arab leaders. With the failure of these moderate demands, the Arab movement now entered a new and more militant phase.

The Arab Congress of 1913 Wins a Hollow Victory

The next step—a landmark in the history of Arab nationalism—was the convening of an Arab Congress in Paris, between June 18–23, 1913, under the aegis of al-Fatat. The debate at this Congress, attended by 24 delegates of Arab movements, was marked by frankness, but there was general agreement that the integrity of the Ottoman Empire should be preserved. Nevertheless, the CUP regime reacted to the Congress with hostility, although it later directed the Ottoman representative in Paris to negotiate with the Congress. An agreement was reached which was at first thought to be a victory for the Arabs. It soon became evident, however, from the Ottoman decree of August 13 that presumably implemented the agreement, that the "victory" was very limited. Nonetheless, the CUP regime won Arab support of the decree by blandishing many Arab leaders with offers of high positions in the government. By the beginning of 1914, the CUP government seemed to be in control of the situation.

The government's advantage, however, was soon lost as a result of a cause célèbre which agitated Arab nationalist circles and attracted international attention. This occurred in early 1914, when Aziz Ali, founding member of al-'Ahd, was arrested and tried for corruption and treason. When he received a death sentence, there was general indignation throughout the Arabic-speaking world. Finally, through the diplomatic intervention of the British, Aziz Ali was released in April 1914 and allowed to go into exile in Egypt, where he remained until the Arab revolt began.⁶

Tribal and Dynastic Rivalries Divide the Arabs of the Deserts

While political dissidence and competing nationalisms festered in Constantinople and the cities of the Fertile Crescent, age-old dynastic rivalries and tribal antagonisms continued as a way of life in the deserts of Arabia. Here the Turks had few firm friends. Only Ibn Rashid, Emir (Prince) of Na'il and ruler of the Shammar region, was favorably disposed toward the Turks, mainly because the Rashidis needed support against their rivals in the Nejd and Hijaz regions. In Yemen, the Imam Yahya of Sana'a had achieved virtual autonomy in his remote corner of the peninsula, and his loyalty to the Ottoman Sultan, whose Sunni orthodoxy was objectionable to the Shi'a Muslims of Yemen, was largely a matter of tactics to counterbalance British and Italian influence. The Emir of Sabayyeh in the Asir region was fiercely anti-Turkish and allied himself first with the Italians and later with the British.

The sheikhs along the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean were firmly allied with the British government of India. Ibn Sa'ud—Emir of Riyadh, ruler of the Nejd and Hasa regions, and religious leader of the militant and puritanical Islamic sect of the Wahabis—was fiercely independent in his dealings with both Turks and British, although for tactical reasons he leaned toward the British. Ibn Sa'ud aspired to political leadership over the whole of Arabia. His foremost rival in this endeavor was Sherif* Husayn Ibn Ali, Emir of Mecca and ruler of the Hijaz region and the Ottoman-appointed Guardian of the Holy Cities of Mecca and Medina, who saw himself in the role to which Ibn Sa'ud aspired.⁷

Although Sherif Husayn had been appointed by the CUP regime in 1908, relations between the Young Turks in Constantinople and this shrewd and ambitious descendant of the Prophet had deteriorated by 1914. One of the points of disagreement was a projected extension of the Hijaz Railway from Medina, where the rail line from Damascus then stopped, to Mecca. Sherif Husayn argued that a railroad would destroy the livelihood of the Hijaz camel-herders, who depended on carrying Muslim pilgrims to Mecca; his real objection was that the railroad would enable the Turks to exercise closer administrative control over the Hijaz. So serious was this conflict that Sherif Husayn in February 1914 instructed his son Abdullah to discuss with Ronald Storrs, Oriental Secretary of the British Agency in Egypt, the prospects of British support. Thus, even before the outbreak of World War I, the first steps towards a Hijaz-British alliance had been taken.⁸

Turkey Declares War on Side of the Central Powers

When war broke out in Europe in August 1914, Turkey did not immediately declare against the Allied Powers of Britain, France, and Russia. Although secretly allied with the Central Powers of Germany, Austro-Hungary, and Italy, the Ottoman Empire feigned neutrality for two months, in order to gain time in which to build up its forces and to allow a pro-German war party faction to consolidate its hold over the Ottoman government. During this period, the Allies hoped to keep the Turks out of the conflict, but at the same time the British were in contact with Arab dissidents such as Sherif Husayn. When Turkey finally came into the war on the side of the Central Powers on November 5, 1914, the British had already opened the door for more detailed discussions with the Arabs, as well as with other non-Turkish peoples in the Ottoman Empire.

The Ottoman Empire was vulnerable to attacks from Russia in the Caucasian mountains (inhabited by Christian Armenians and other ethnic minorities), from Allied fleets in the Black and Mediterranean Seas, and from British bases in Egypt, Aden, and India. On the other hand, the southern flank of Ottoman territory offered the Germans access to the British Empire's life

*Sherif refers to the Guardian of the Holy Places. This title has been confined to the descendants of the Prophet.

line via the Red Sea and the Suez Canal. Submarine and mine damage to Allied shipping in the Red Sea, attacks on Suez across the Sinai peninsula, and a communications link with German forces operating in East Africa were among the prospects open to the Central Powers, if they could exploit Turkish territories in Syria and Arabia.

Turkish Arabia Becomes an Area of Strategic Importance

In January-February 1915, the Turkish army, accompanied by German advisers, launched its first attack against Suez. Although this bold assault was soon repulsed by the British, the attack alerted the Allies to the danger which the Turks posed in that quarter. In the course of 1915 the Allies suffered a series of military setbacks in the Middle East and Balkans: the Russian drive into eastern Turkey failed despite an Armenian uprising around Lake Van, the British drive towards Baghdad came to a halt around Kut-al-Amara (which fell the next year to a Turkish siege force), and the Allied invasion of European Turkey, the ill-fated Gallipoli Campaign, resulted in an ignominious defeat by the year's end.

These developments, in conjunction with a continued Turkish threat to the Suez-Red Sea route to India, caused the British to regard the Hijaz region with a new interest. In 1916, the Hijaz was not only the holy land of the Muslim world, but also an area of strategic military importance, destined to become a battlefield of the war and the scene of a popular uprising.

INSURGENCY

The Arab revolt which occurred in 1916 was preceded by a series of talks and communications between British representatives in Cairo and Sherif Husayn in Mecca, who was represented in many of these meetings by his sons Abdullah and Faysal, the chief Arab negotiators and architects of the British-Arab alliance. The Sherif had had several preliminary contacts and exchanges of views during the winter of 1914-15 with Arab nationalists, the British, and the Turks.

Sherif Husayn Gains Arab and British Support for an Arab Revolt

When Sherif Husayn discovered that the Turkish vali (governor) of Hijaz was involved in a plot against his life, he sent Faysal to protest before the Ottoman government in Constantinople, but instructed his son to stop off in Damascus long enough to get in touch with Syrian nationalist leaders there.⁹

In Damascus, Faysal met with the leaders of al-Fatat and al-'Ahd. On his return from the Ottoman capital, Faysal found that his friends in these secret Arab societies had drawn up a protocol defining "the conditions on which the Arab leaders would be prepared to cooperate with Great Britain against Turkey."¹⁰ Six Arab leaders in Damascus took an oath of allegiance to Sherif Husayn, recognizing him as spokesman for the Arabs in the event that he obtained a British agreement on the basis of this protocol, and promising to raise Arab troops in Syria to fight the Turks. Turkish countermeasures in the summer of 1915 and again in the spring of

1916 destroyed much of the insurgent organization in Damascus; however, the groundwork had been laid for Syrian cooperation with the insurgents in the Hijaz.

In the meantime, between July 14, 1915, and January 30, 1916, an exchange of letters between Sherif Husayn and Sir Henry McMahon, British High Commissioner in Egypt—the now famous "Husayn-McMahon correspondence"—had led to an official alliance between Husayn and the British. Without dealing with the intricacies of this controversial exchange, it may be noted that the British promised to support Husayn in his effort to free the Arab provinces from Turkish domination, without ever specifying precisely the territorial limits of the Arab state to emerge at the end of hostilities. Confronted with a plethora of conflicting demands in the Middle East, the British reacted by making a series of vaguely worded wartime agreements with their several allies. The difficulties, of course, did not emerge until after the war had ended.

Faysal Raises an Arab Army and Attacks the Turks in the Hijaz

Originally scheduled to coincide with and to support the British army's attack on Palestine, the Arab insurgency actually began some months sooner than the British expected, when a Turkish crackdown on the Arab underground in Syria and fresh troop movements into Hijaz caused Arab tempers to rise and prompted Sherif Husayn to act on his own. In May 1916, the Sherif sent word to his son Faysal in Damascus urging him to return at once to lead the revolt against the Turks. Turkish authorities in Damascus were suspicious of Husayn and his sons, but were finally persuaded to allow Faysal to travel to Medina, on his promise to raise an Arab army to fight for the Turks—a goal they had long sought to accomplish. Leaving Damascus on May 16, Faysal visited the sheikhs and clan leaders of the Hijaz, seeking to enlist their sons under his father's banner. The insurgent army was thus organized, literally under the noses of the Turks.

Suddenly, on June 5, 1916, the long smouldering issue between Turk and Arab was finally joined in open revolt and armed conflict. In a proclamation of revolt, Sherif Husayn emphasized his concern for the welfare of Islam and denounced the secular tendencies of the CUP regime in Constantinople. The Sherif appealed to all Muslims to follow his example and laid particular stress on the necessity of curbing Turkish tyranny over the Arabs in Syria.

At the same time, Arab forces—led by Sherif Husayn and his sons Faysal, Ali, Abdullah, and Zayd—carried out surprise attacks on Turkish garrisons throughout the Hijaz. Military operations in Hijaz continued unabatedly from early June to late September. The insurgents, though poorly armed at the outset of the revolt, outnumbered the Turks and had the advantage of surprise. They possessed a thorough knowledge of the countryside and were ably supported by British naval forces in their attacks on the Red Sea ports of Jidda, Rabigh, and Yanbu.

At Mecca, the insurgents, led personally by Sherif Husayn, soon overcame the small Turkish garrison in the city, although the Turks held the outlying forts in the hills around the city for several weeks. From these positions, the Turks were able to shell the city and, according to

some sources, damage the Great Mosque containing the Ka'bah, the "Black Stone" sacred to Muslims. The Arabs triumphantly recounted that Turkish shells chipped from the mosque the name of Uthman Ibn Affan, the fourth Muslim caliph and founder of the Ottoman dynasty—an incident which the rebels regarded as an omen of the downfall of Turkish authority over the Arab world.¹¹ The Turks were finally driven from the fortresses around Mecca by British artillery landed at Jidda. By the end of September, Arab insurgents under Husayn's son Abdullah had blasted the last Turkish defenders of Ta'if out of its surrounding forts, with artillery brought up from Jidda and Mecca or captured from the Turkish garrison. The attack on Medina, led by Faysal and Ali, on the other hand, was not successful; and the Arabs fell back to the Red Sea ports of Yanbu and Rabigh.

Arab Offensive Hits a Stalemate

The military situation in the Hijaz now reached a temporary stalemate. The insurgents held Mecca, Ta'if and several Red Sea ports, while the Turks held Medina and all the surrounding territory in the northern and eastern sectors of Hijaz, including Wajh and Aqaba on the Red Sea. The Subh Mountains, between Medina and the Red Sea coast, were contested by Faysal's tribal forces and Turkish troops operating out of Medina.¹²

The high-spirited but poorly equipped irregular forces of the Sherif and his sons had proved themselves unequal to Turkish troops in sustained regular combat. Fearing a Turkish counter-offensive against Mecca, which in the fall of 1916 the Sherif's forces would have been hard pressed to defend, the Arabs entreated the Allies to rush to the Hijaz arms, money, and military supplies. They wanted mountain artillery manned by Egyptians or other Muslim soldiers from Allied colonial territories and a few airplanes to impress the Bedouin tribesmen. In late 1916, when the Sherif had more men than arms and the revolt had enthusiastic popular support among the Bedouin tribesmen but lacked the disciplined and organized regular forces needed to defeat the Turks in battle, foreign support was crucial to the survival of the Arab movement.

Allies Send Support to the Arabs

The Arab revolt had caught the British unprepared, but they had dispatched Lt. Col. E. C. Wilson, Governor of the Red Sea Province of Sudan, to Jidda as His Majesty's chief representative in the Hijaz, as soon as this port was liberated from the Turks. Lt. Gen. Sir Archibald Murray, in command of the British army in Egypt, was, however, unsympathetic to the revolt. To him, it seemed premature and futile and altogether too remote from his primary objective of defending Suez and defeating the Turkish army in Palestine, which in fact was engaged in a second attack on Suez at the time of the Hijaz revolt. On the other hand, Adm. Sir Rosslyn Wemyss, in command of naval forces in the Red Sea, took an early and active role in support of the Arabs, bombarding Turkish shore positions and landing supplies to the rebels.¹³

Although the Allied Powers were divided in their councils as to the extent and type of support they could, or should, give the Hijaz rebels, the French sent to Jidda a small military mission under Col. E. Bramond and some artillery manned by Algerian and Moroccan Muslims; and the British assumed a major military commitment to the insurgents in the winter of 1916-17. The British military effort was under the overall direction of Gen. Sir Reginald Wingate, Governor General of Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and an experienced hand in Middle Eastern and African affairs, who later succeeded McMahon. Colonel Wilson operated under Wingate. To assist Wilson, a British Military Mission was set up in Jidda in January 1917, under Lt. Col. S. F. Newcombe.¹⁴

T. E. Lawrence Acts as British Liaison With Faysal

The key personality in the British involvement with the Arabs was Lt. (later Lt. Col.) Thomas E. Lawrence, a young intelligence officer at British headquarters in Cairo who, from his student days at Oxford, had specialized in Middle Eastern archeology and Arabic language and culture. Much of the notoriety and publicity which the Arab revolt was later to achieve in the Western world was directly due to public interest in and the postwar writing of this highly controversial young guerrilla leader whose literary abilities and forceful, if neurotic, personality bestowed a glamour and exotic aura on an episode which more conventional and objective observers regarded as a sideshow in the larger experience of World War I.¹⁵

A zealous supporter of the Arab cause, Lawrence had accompanied Ronald Storrs to Jidda in September 1916 to discuss insurgent needs with Colonel Wilson and the Sherif's sons, Abdullah, Ali, and the young Zayd. After traveling to Faysal's camp in the Subh Mountains, Lawrence became thoroughly convinced that this son of Husayn was the man to lead the Arab revolt.¹⁶ A few months later Lawrence returned to Arabia as British liaison officer with Faysal's army. In this capacity, he served under Colonel Newcombe's Mission.

Limitations on Types of British Support

Political considerations as to Britain's broader imperial interests and certain cultural factors in the situation imposed definite conditions on direct British participation in the Arab revolt. For one thing, there was a shortage of British troops. But in addition the presence of non-Muslims in the Hijaz was considered a sacrilege by devout Muslims, and international repercussions detrimental to both the insurgent and Allied causes could be expected if the Arab revolt led to large-scale fighting between British Christians and Turkish Muslims in the holy places of Islam.

As it was, the ease and safety with which the faithful were able to make their traditional pilgrimage to Mecca in the autumn of 1916, under Allied and rebel protection, brought credit to the insurgent cause—as well as bolstering the Hijaz economy, which was based on pilgrim

traffic.¹⁷ The British could help by sending advisers, arms and equipment, money, and certain captured Arab troops and officers.

In addition to Lawrence, a number of other Arabic-speaking British officers, as well as some Egyptians, came to the Hijaz after late 1916 to serve as advisers with the insurgents. Demolition experts and munitions specialists trained the tribal irregulars to use the explosives, machineguns, artillery, and small arms which the British sent the Arabs. Beginning in 1916, the British government paid a monthly stipend to the Sherif of 20,000 pounds, which he distributed in wages and bribes to tribal sheikhs who joined the revolt.¹⁸

Of great importance to the military training and professional organization of insurgent forces were the many Arab officers transported by the British to the Hijaz. Turkish-trained officers, such as Ja'far Pasha al-Askari and Nuri Pasha as-Sa'id of Baghdad* and Aziz Ali of Egypt—who as Arab nationalists were sympathetic to the Sherif's revolt—began in the winter of 1916-17 to put together a regular Arab army in the Hijaz. The insurgents had captured several thousand Arab and Turkish prisoners during the first months of the revolt, and the British had taken many more Arab prisoners in the Mesopotamian and Sinai campaigns. In the fall of 1916, Aziz Ali began retraining these Arab troops at Rabigh and organized them into a regular army to oppose the Turkish regulars at Medina, while tribal irregulars under Faysal, Abdullah, and other Sherifians carried out "pinprick" guerrilla operations in the Subh hills and along the Hijaz Railway linking Medina with Damascus.

Cultural and Political Considerations Complicate Arab Revolt

These efforts were complicated, however, by regional and cultural differences among the insurgents, who included Bedouin tribesmen from the Hijaz and urban intellectuals from all over the Arab world. Moreover, the real centers of authority in every insurgent unit were the Sherifians, particularly the sons and close kinsmen of Sherif Husayn, and there were often conflicts between Sherifians and Arab officers from the outside. As presumed descendants of the Prophet Muhammad, all members of Husayn's clan enjoyed great personal position in the Hijaz and were accorded an elite status among the Bedouin tribes. The Bedouins provided the backbone of the Arab revolt in the Hijaz, while the townspeople of the area, many of whom were not natives, were less inclined to support the insurgents.¹⁹

By late 1916, the Sherifians achieved a more formal political status when Husayn's regime was recognized by the Allied Powers as an independent government. Although his real authority did not extend beyond rebel-held territory in the Hijaz, Husayn had proclaimed himself "King of the Arabs" on October 29, 1916, and named his son Abdullah foreign minister. The insurgent regime was, in fact, very much a family affair.

*Both men later served as prime ministers of Iraq and both were killed in coups d'état—Ja'far in 1937 and Nuri 1958.

The British refused to recognize Husayn in this exalted capacity, however, since they feared that the Sherif's ambitious claims to leadership over Arab rulers who had never before acknowledged the political sovereignty of the Emir of Mecca might drive these Arabs into the arms of the Turks. Even the pro-British emirs of southern and eastern Arabia, such as Ibn Sa'ud of Nejd, for example, were *definitely* not prepared to accept Husayn's overlordship. Moreover, an Arab kingdom which linked the countries of the Fertile Crescent and Mesopotamia with Hijaz and Arabia would conflict with postwar British and French interests in the Middle East. Therefore, when the British finally recognized Husayn's government on December 15, it was modestly referred to as the "Kingdom of Hijaz."

Strength, Weaponry, and Recruitment of Arab Fighters

At the beginning of the revolt the Sherif's forces numbered around 6,000. At the end of the first three weeks, insurgent strength had climbed to over 30,000 troops—some sources say 50,000²⁰—although there were only some 10,000 rifles in rebel hands. By early 1917, after considerable waxing and waning of Sherifian forces, the total troop strength of the insurgents stood around 70,000—28,000 armed with rifles. Estimates of total insurgent strength must be regarded with great caution, as these generally included the families and camp followers who attached themselves to the Arab movement at various times.

In the course of 1917, the insurgents were regularized into an almost conventional Arab army. The regulars, however, were always a small part of the total force, which was constantly having numbers of irregulars attach or detach themselves. After Faysal and Lawrence led this force north from Aqaba toward Damascus in mid-1917, total insurgent strength was constantly increased through the addition of Allied troop contingents and the many tribal warriors out of southern Syria who joined the revolt in a pell-mell, bandwagon effect. Lawrence, working with the tribal chieftains, was responsible for recruiting Bedouins as they were needed from the local area of operations. According to official British historians, the war was "not unattractive" to the Bedouin. "He had not to go far from his home, and he returned to it when he chose. The spoils were his own property. And while all the world was full of paper money, he was paid, and well paid, in chinking golden sovereigns."²¹

Fighting Characteristics of the Bedouin Insurgents

Lawrence appreciated the difficulties as well as the unique advantages of using Bedouin warriors in military operations against the Turks. Though physically hardy and naturally skilled in riding and shooting, the tribesmen were a wild and undisciplined lot. "The actual contingents were constantly shifting," Lawrence later wrote, "in obedience to the rule of flesh."²² Sometimes a family owned a single rifle and this would be used by each son in turn, serving a few days at a time. Families sent their sons to serve under the sheikh to whom they owed allegiance,

and most sheikhs could command around a hundred followers. Blood feuds between families and clans were supposedly suspended during the revolt, but the Bedouins were not inclined to trust or work closely with their neighbors, even against a common enemy.

For this reason, Lawrence concluded that the Bedouins were good only for defense and commando-type raiding operations. "One company of Turks firmly entrenched in open country could have defied the entire army of them," Lawrence wrote, "and a pitched defeat, with its casualties, would have ended the war by sheer horror." The Arabian tribesmen's "acquisitive recklessness made them keen on booty, and whetted them to tear up railways, plunder caravans, and steal camels; but they were too free-minded to endure command, or to fight in team," Lawrence felt. On the other hand, if armed with light automatic weapons and allowed to operate independently in the hills around Medina, the Arab guerrillas could provide an effective defensive screen behind which the British and Arab officers could build up a regular Arab force to challenge the Turks successfully either in the Hijaz or southern Syria.²³

Arabs Harass the Hijaz Railway

The stalemate reached in the first few months of the Arab revolt was ended in early 1917 with an insurgent attack on the Red Sea port of Wajh. Abdullah's tribal forces, operating northeast of the railroad between Medina and Ha'il, crossed the railroad and took up positions from which to prevent Turkish reinforcement of the Wajh garrison from Medina, at the same time protecting Mecca. Faysal, with 10,000 men and artillery, moved north from Yanbu to attack Wajh overland, while ships from the British Royal Navy bombarded the city and landed Muslim troops. Wajh was taken on January 23 by this naval effort alone, as Faysal's overland forces were delayed in arriving. The taking of Wajh frightened the Turks, and "Thenceforth there was never question of a Turkish attack on Mecca."²⁴

With Wajh as their advance base of operations, the British and Arabs carried out extensive sabotage operations against the Hijaz Railway, beginning in February 1917. For example, on February 12, Maj. H. Garland left Wajh with a demolition party of 50 Bedouins and after a week's journey by camel reached the railroad at a point 120 miles north of Medina. They had barely finished laying the explosives when a Turkish train came along; the engine was derailed and the cars left stranded between two destroyed portions of the track. Such raids became more frequent as time passed.²⁵

Arabs Support British at Aqaba

From early 1917, the insurgents retained the offensive against the Turks. At this time, the British army was also on a general offensive—from Mesopotamia, where Baghdad was taken on March 11, to the Sinai peninsula, where General Murray's offensive came to a temporary halt in April before Gaza, which was defended by Turkish forces stiffened by German increments. To

support the British army in southern Palestine, the Allies directed the Arab insurgents to attack Aqaba next. In the meantime, Lawrence was sent on a reconnaissance mission through southern Syria, armed with 400 pounds of gold coins, to enlist the sheikhs of that area in the Arab cause. When Lawrence's party defeated a Turkish battalion at Abu al-Lissan near Ma'an in a surprise encounter, the defenders of Aqaba suddenly fled to Ma'an. Faced with imminent naval bombardment and the prospect of hostile Bedouins across their line of retreat, the Turks did not want to repeat the Wajh experience.

British Bring Arabs Into Closer Organizational Ties

In June 1917, Gen. Edmund Allenby replaced Murray as British commander in Egypt. More sympathetic to the Arab movement than Murray and sensitive to its importance in British plans for Palestine, Allenby hoped to give the Allies some dramatic victories in the Middle East—much needed at a time when the Allied cause seemed interminably bogged down in Western Europe and when the Eastern front was dissolving in the face of Russia's domestic crisis.²⁶ Accordingly, Allenby organized a Hijaz Operations Staff in Cairo to coordinate Arab forces, which then included Faysal's Northern Army at Aqaba and the various tribal irregulars under Sherif Husayn and Emirs Ali and Abdullah and the other Sherifians in southern Hijaz.

The Northern Army, by this time in many respects a conventional force, contained Faysal's tribal irregulars; the Arab regulars, now commanded by Ja'far al-Askari, who had replaced Aziz Ali when the Egyptian officer came into conflict with Sherif Husayn; a British contingent commanded by Lt. Col. P. C. Joyce and made up of an armored car battery, a flight from the Royal Flying Corps, a company of the Egyptian Camel Corps, and support elements; and a small French detachment under a Captain Pisani.²⁷ Faysal might be regarded at this time as a regular commander operating under Allenby's orders. Lawrence, officially described as the British political officer at Faysal's headquarters, led long-range reconnaissance raids through southern Syria, possibly as far north as Damascus.

Arab-British Attacks in Hijaz Tie Down Turkish Army

During the summer, sabotage operations against the railroad continued, often accompanied by air attacks on Turkish outposts and repair parties along the line between Medina and Ma'an. Whether by conscious design or accident, British strategy throughout 1917 was to tie down the Turkish army in the Hijaz rather than to force it to withdraw to Damascus.²⁸ The Allied drive into Palestine was finally begun, after several delays, in late 1917, when Allenby took Gaza and Jaffa in November and on December 8 captured Jerusalem. This Holy City for three faiths was the first major city to pass into Allied hands in World War I.

The British offensive came to another halt in 1918 when troops had to be rushed to the Allied front in France. During the lull in conventional operations by Allenby's force, the Arab

insurgents continued raiding and sabotaging Turkish outposts along the railroad as far north as Damascus. In the spring of 1918, when the British learned that the Turks were planning to leave the Hijaz, operations against the railway were stepped up, and the line near Ma'an was destroyed so thoroughly that the Turks could not use it.²⁹

Arab Revolt Grows, Culminating in Entry Into Damascus

Political work among the Bedouins east of the Dead Sea and Jordan River was also stepped up in this period. The British dropped leaflets bearing messages from both Sherif Husayn and the British high command urging the Arabs to join the revolution against the Ottomans. After being in communication with Lawrence and emissaries from Sherif Husayn and Prince Faysal, Nuri Sha'lan, paramount chief of the Ruwalah tribal confederation, and the Druze leader, Husayn al-Atrash, both agreed to cast their lots with the Arab movement.³⁰

The Bedouins around Ma'an, 'Amman, and Der'a were thus in league with the Allied-Arab forces, which resumed their advance in September 1918. The final phase of the Arab revolt, which by this time had been transformed into conventional warfare, saw the railroad junction of Der'a fall to Faysal's Northern Army and Allenby's troops on September 27-28 and the triumphant entry of Allied and Arab forces into Damascus by early October. Desultory skirmishes continued until the end of the month, when Turkey capitulated to the Allied Powers and signed the Armistice of Mudros on October 30, 1918. The Turkish garrison at Medina eventually surrendered, somewhat anticlimactically, some months later.³¹

COUNTERINSURGENCY

The Turks had had several centuries of practical experience in dealing with problems of internal dissidence and tribal revolt in their heterogeneous empire. Their reaction to Arab disaffection and restiveness, in the first years of the 20th century as in earlier times, was one of constant vacillation between harsh brutality and paternalistic policies, both designed to weaken or assuage Arab opposition to Ottoman rule. On the one hand, promises, blandishments, and bribes were offered to certain individuals, and occasionally to entire tribes and communities; on the other hand, military force and police repression were also applied liberally in the Arab provinces. While this approach had not settled any basic problems, it had at least enabled the Turks to contain dissidence within certain bounds. But this was not to be the case in 1916-18.

A Weak Turkish Response to Arab Dissidence

For a number of reasons, the Arab revolt in 1916 found the Turks ill prepared. For some time there had been a restless ferment among the Turkish elite, many of whom were anxious to modernize their country's political and social system, as well as its technology and military

establishment. These secular-minded reformers, who had moved against Sultan Abdul-Hamid II in 1908, were more concerned with the empire's Turkish core than with its outlying Arab provinces, whose only basis for inclusion in the Ottoman realm, other than historical conquest, was religious and sectarian. The Young Turks of the CUP regime regarded the Arabs as a conservative force in the Ottoman Empire, and to certain Turkish nationalists, such as Mustafa Kemal,* the loss of these "ungrateful" provinces was looked upon as the necessary price to be paid for achieving a strong, revitalized, and truly Turkish state.

Furthermore, in 1916, Turkey was involved in a major war and was fighting on several fronts simultaneously. Economically and militarily dependent on Germany and the Central Powers, the once powerful Ottoman Empire had become little more than a pawn in the European power struggle. The Turks felt that their primary strategic objectives lay in the direction of Russia, a traditionally unfriendly country which controlled the Caucasian borderlands and had well-known designs on Turkey's western anchor in the Bosphorus Strait. These purely Turkish objectives were relegated to second place, however, in the overall strategic plans of the Germans and Austrians, who were more concerned with the Balkans and the southern flank of Ottoman territory facing British, French, and Italian holdings in Africa and the Middle East. Indeed, Turkish control of Arabia was a matter of considerable importance to German war aims.

Failure of the Jihad as an Instrument of Turkish Policy

The Germans placed high hopes in the Ottoman Sultan's proclamation in November 1914 of a holy war, or jihad, calling on Muslims throughout the world to go to war against the Allies, whom the Sultan named as infidels and enemies of Islam. The jihad was regarded by the Germans as an excellent vehicle for inciting revolts against the British in India, Egypt, Sudan, and other colonies; against French and Italians in North Africa; and against the Russians in central Asia. The Turks hoped it would solidify their hold over dissident Muslim groups, such as the Arabs, and provide a more legitimate basis for Ottoman rule over the non-Turkish provinces of the empire. In theory a shrewd move, the jihad proclamation actually had little effect on the war effort and failed to check the spread of separatist ideas among the Ottoman Empire's non-Turkish populations. Working against the success of the jihad was the fact that it was the first time it had been tried in modern times. Indeed, it was difficult for Muslims to perceive the religious difference between the Christian Allied Powers they were supposed to fight against and the Ottoman Empire's Christian partners of Germany and Austro-Hungary whom they were supposed to fight for.

Furthermore, the active support of Sherif Husayn, as Emir of Mecca and Guardian of the Islamic Holy Places, was of crucial importance in the implementation of the jihad. Accordingly,

*Mustafa Kemal, better known as Kemal Ataturk, was to emerge in the 1920's as the founder of modern Turkey.

the Turks urged him to send the traditional Prophet's standard to Damascus and to raise an army among the tribes of the Hijaz to fight with the Ottoman army, then preparing to attack the British at Suez. After some delay, Husayn sent the sacred banner³² and promised eventually to raise a force of Hijaz volunteers, although he expressed extreme reluctance over this point, arguing that it might endanger the holy places by provoking a British invasion.

The Turks also received Fayçal, whom Husayn sent to Damascus to discuss the matter further with them. They later alleged that Fayçal had taken an oath to raise an army and expressed his readiness to die as a martyr in the attack on Suez. But in exchange the Sherifians had demanded a firman (an Ottoman royal decree) granting autonomy to the Hijaz and making the emirate hereditary in Husayn's family. According to Turkish sources, misunderstandings and personal clashes between Fayçal and Turkish officials were responsible for the break in Arab-Turkish relations later in 1913-14.³³

Jemal Pasha Turns to Repressive Measures in 1915

The chief representative of the Ottoman government in the Arab provinces during World War I was Ahmed Jemal Pasha, the Turkish viceroy, who, along with Talaat and Enver Pasha was one of the triumvirate then ruling the empire. Differing somewhat from the extreme Turk-centered nationalism of Talaat and Enver Pasha, Jemal Pasha had been appointed commander in chief of the Turkish Fourth Army and governor of Syria in early January 1915, partly to remove him from the capital city. Jemal Pasha tried at first to win popular support among the Syrians by promises of a comprehensive welfare program and governmental reforms. These were never to materialize, however, for the resources of the empire were already heavily committed to the war effort. The Turkish attack on Suez in late January and early February absorbed Jemal's more immediate attention, and he tried to capitalize on what jihad sentiment there was in the Arab provinces. But when the attack failed, he turned in anger on the Arab nationalists whose activities in Damascus and other Syrian cities were not unknown to the Turkish police.

Police repression and ruthless brutality became the order of the day in the spring of 1915, when hundreds of Arab nationalists were arrested on charges of collaborating with Turkey's enemies - the British, French, and Russians. Perhaps those arrested had indeed been in some form of contact with the Allies, but many Arab nationalists were not yet fully committed to complete separation from the Ottoman Empire and only wanted more local autonomy. Tried by military and special courts, many Arabs were executed as traitors in early August 1915. Most of those executed were highly educated and respected leaders of their communities, both Muslim and Christian.

These police measures were perfectly legal and proper in Turkish eyes, since they were directed against persons plotting to subvert Ottoman authority in collusion with Turkey's foreign enemies. Under the circumstances, however, Turkish interests might have been better

served by political prudence through lenient treatment and political concessions, than by rigid adherence to the law which created martyrs for the Arab cause.

Transfer of Arab Units and a New Wave of Anti-Arab Repression

More successful were the various administrative transfers which Jemal Pasha instituted in the summer of 1915 to cope with growing dissidence among Arab contingents in the Turkish army. Arab soldiers and officers were transferred from Syria and assigned to duty in far-off posts in European Turkey and Mesopotamia, where they were not affected by popular sentiment and were not torn between loyalty to their Arab kinsmen and home communities and their duty to the Ottoman state. Although there were some individual defections even in these remote locations, there was never any organized defection of Arab units in the Turkish army, even after the Arab revolt broke into the open in June 1916.

In the spring of 1916, Jemal Pasha ordered a new series of mass arrests and deportations in Syria, imprisoning or sending into exile some 3,000 Syrians by the end of the war. In fact, the actual timing of the Arab revolt may be traced to Jemal's crackdown on Syrian nationalists in May 1916. Torture of Arab prisoners and liberal use of the death penalty were mitigated only somewhat, even when the Sherif threatened to retaliate by taking similar measures against Turkish officers captured in the Hijaz.³⁴

One explanation for the repressive measures taken by Jemal Pasha in the spring of 1916 may be that he had apparently been secretly communicating with Russia and France to advance a personal bargain. Offering to get Turkey out of the war, Jemal was allegedly seeking in return Russian and French diplomatic support for his personal ambitions of building an empire of his own in the Arab provinces, including the Armenian and Kurdish areas of the Ottoman Empire. Jemal's secret flirtations with Turkey's enemies may well have disposed him to take harsh measures against the Arab leaders in order to dispel suspicions about his own loyalty. Moreover, it has been suggested that Jemal may have communicated his plans to some Arab leaders, only to sense later that they could not be trusted and hence had to be eliminated. One of those sentenced to death on May 6, 1916, Abdul-Karim al-Khalil, stated while standing at the foot of the gallows, "I know the real reason for which Jemal Pasha is hanging me and it will be known to history one day."³⁵

Turkish-German Expedition Triggers Revolt in Hijaz

Simultaneously with Jemal Pasha's suppression of Syrian nationalists, a military move occurred which directly affected the timing of the revolt. This was the passage through the Hijaz of a 3,500-man Turkish force commanded by Khairi Bey, en route to Yemen.³⁶ The strategic mission of this expedition, which contained a separate German communications team under Maj. Freiherr Othmar von Stotzingen, was to establish radio communications with German

agents in Africa and especially with General Lettow-Vorbeck's East Africa Command, whose German-officered African troops gave the Central Powers an additional front in that remote quarter. The Sherif, however, interpreted the expedition as reinforcement of the Turkish garrison in Hijaz. In fact, the outbreak of the Arab revolt in June 1916 seems to have caught the Germans and Turks largely by surprise, as it had the British.

Turkish Troops in Hijaz Unable To Hold Mecca

At this time, the Turks reportedly had in the Hijaz some 15,000 troops, including one independent division which was deployed in several widely separated garrisons and outposts, such as Medina, Mecca, Ta'if, and the ports along the Red Sea.³⁷ There was also a division in nearby Asir and two divisions further south in Yemen, but owing to communications difficulties these troops were virtually isolated. The major Turkish force was concentrated in southern Syria, where Jemal Pasha's 60,000-man Fourth Army guarded the entrance to Palestine. After two unsuccessful attempts, the Fourth Army was no longer a serious threat to Suez, but its hold over Syria remained secure in 1916.

The Turkish garrison in Mecca had only about 1,400 soldiers when the Sherifians attacked. These troops held the city for only three days, but outside the city the fort of Jlad, which was equipped with heavy artillery, resisted for three weeks. A far larger portion of the Mecca garrison, approximately 3,000 men, was stationed about 70 miles away at the mountain resort of Ta'if; this outpost and its outlying forts resisted until late September, by which time the Turks had lost several Red Sea ports before combined attacks by Arab land and British naval forces—a pattern which was to be repeated later at Wajh and Aqaba.³⁸

Turks Limited to Medina and Along Railway Line to Damascus

By the fall of 1916, only the northern and eastern sections of the Hijaz remained in Ottoman hands. But the country was still not lost, for the Turks retained a strong garrison in Medina, commanded by the dour Gen. Fakhr al-Din Pasha, who had successfully repulsed Faysal's Bedouin army in June. The Medina garrison was reinforced by troops from the Khairi Bey force and soldiers sent from Syria to a strength estimated at between 12,000 and 25,000, and became known as the Hijaz Expeditionary Force.³⁹ From this stronghold at Medina the Turks were in a position to threaten Mecca and the ports of Yanbu, Rabigh, and Jidda. For the first six months of the insurgency, that is, the last six months of 1916, there was considerable offensive action by Ottoman forces operating out of Medina. During this crucial period, Ottoman field commanders in the Hijaz repeatedly called for additional troops and military supplies; however, their requests usually fell on deaf ears, for the government in Constantinople, now dominated by War Minister Enver Pasha, was more concerned with the Russian front than with Bedouin rebels in the Hijaz.

In early October 1916, the powerful Turkish force in Medina moved out to make an offensive stab toward Yanbu, from which point it was planned to assault Mecca by a flanking movement and thus cut off the rebel capital from its Red Sea ports. Although victorious in several conventional military encounters with the Arab insurgents, the Turkish force failed to reach Yanbu and was forced to turn back to Medina. Defeated as much by logistical obstacles as by the insurgents, the Turks lost some 5,000 soldiers to the heat of the desert and to the Bedouin raiders who harassed and sniped at them as they marched. After this offensive, which was their most important single military campaign against the insurgents, as well as their greatest setback, the Turks remained bottled up around Medina for the duration of the war. ⁴⁰

But if the Hijaz Expeditionary Force was not able to reconquer southern and western Hijaz, it was nevertheless able to make occasional sorties into the surrounding countryside to ward off Bedouin attackers and break up any siege force which the Arabs might concentrate around the city.

After the loss of Wajh in February 1917, the Turks had to contend with increasingly frequent sabotage attacks on the railroad, Medina's lifeline to Damascus. As a result of Arab guerrilla operations, trains were usually operated only in daylight, and armed patrols and repair parties were sent along the tracks to keep them open. The stockpiles of railroad equipment and building materials which had been built up in Medina before the war, in preparation for extending the line to Mecca, came in handy during the first year, but by 1918 these supplies had been exhausted. To protect the railroad, about 5,000 troops were stationed at Tabuk, 300 miles north of Medina, and a force eventually reaching about 7,000 men was based at Ma'an, about a hundred miles farther north. Small detachments of these troops were deployed in fortified stations along the railroad. ⁴¹

Turks Face Increasing Logistics Problems and High Casualties

Although there were no large-scale military encounters with the insurgents in 1917-18, the Turks suffered greatly from attrition of forces and lack of supplies. Eventually the men of the Hijaz Expeditionary Force were reduced to eating their transport animals. Constantly harassed by Arab guerrillas and increasingly isolated by sabotage to the railroad, the Turkish army in the Hijaz waited stoically for its fate to be decided by events in Syria, its commander, the proud and stubborn General Fakhr, disregarding all orders from Constantinople to withdraw from Medina to Ma'an. ⁴² This latter city, which was like a buck's linking the Hijaz with Syria, was never under serious attack from British-Arab forces although there were major skirmishes nearby; and the Turks retained control of Ma'an until the end of the war.

Accurate figures on Ottoman casualties in the Hijaz are not available, but the Arabs claimed to have killed some 4,800 Turkish troops by March 1918 and to have wounded 1,600 and captured 8,000. ⁴³

Relations Between Turkey and Germany During World War I

The Germans, Turkey's major European ally, were never directly involved in counterinsurgency operations in the Hijaz, except to provide a few aircraft to overawe the Bedouin. German activity was confined mainly to Syria and Palestine. The Turkish army had been trained and equipped by Germany since before World War I. When war broke out in 1914, there were about 40 German officers with the Turkish Fourth Army in Syria. In preparation for the advance on Egypt, this army was reinforced by a few German infantry battalions, and German technicians were sent to southern Syria to construct roads and railways to facilitate troop movements toward Suez. In 1917, when all hope of reaching Suez had faded and Palestine itself was threatened, the Germans sent Gen. Erich von Falkenhayn to revitalize the Ottoman military establishment.

There was considerable friction between the Turks and their German allies. At the strategic level, the Turks were interested in territorial aggrandizement in the Caucasus at the expense of Russia, whereas the Germans were prodding them to accelerate the war effort against the British in the Middle East. Among the ranks there was some irritation, since German soldiers were better paid, better fed, and better supplied than their Turkish counterparts. Between Falkenhayn and Jemal Pasha there was considerable ill will. Jemal wanted Turkish reinforcements, but did not want Falkenhayn "in the territory which he ruled as absolute Viceroy."⁴⁴ Even after Jemal Pasha, dispossessed of the Fourth Army, had returned to Europe in early 1918, the Germans and Turkish commanders had trouble in getting along. For one thing, language stood in the way. German staff officers conversed with their senior Turkish officers in French, and orders had to be translated before they could be passed. When Falkenhayn was replaced by General der Kavallerie Liman von Sanders as commander in chief of combined Turkish and German forces on March 1, 1918, the latter, who had vast experience as Germany's chief military representative in the Ottoman Empire since 1913, made a determined effort to cope with the problem by making his staff predominantly Turkish.

In March 1918, when von Sanders became commander in chief of combined Turkish-German forces, there were over 6,000 German troops in Syria, including three infantry battalions, three cavalry troops, three machinegun companies, several artillery units, and four squadrons of aircraft.

Germans Try To Woo Arabs by Psychological Operations

The Germans tried to bolster the Ottoman regime through a massive campaign of psychological warfare, which played on the jihad theme and stressed Germany's respect for Islam and support of Turkish-Arab unity in the Middle East. In the fall of 1917, the Germans set up an Arab Bureau in Damascus, headed by a Dr. Niedermayr and staffed by German orientalists and specialists in Middle Eastern affairs. Provided with a lavish budget, the German-controlled Arab Bureau published pamphlets and leaflets extolling the virtues of Pan-Islamic solidarity against

the infidels and heretical and misguided followers of Sherif Husayn. At the same time, under some pressure from the Germans, the Turks offered high posts to any Arab officers who would come over to the Ottoman side. It was on von Falkenhayn's suggestion that the Turks promised to pardon any Arab defector who returned to the Ottoman side.

Revelation of the Sykes-Picot Agreement Offers Chance To Split Arab-British Alliance

In November 1917, when the new Bolshevik regime in Russia published the text of the Sykes-Picot agreement, copies of which were in the tsarist archives, a flurry of hope ran from Berlin to Damascus that this revelation could be used to disrupt the Arab-British alliance. The text of the agreement appeared to show that the Arab provinces of the Ottoman Empire were to be divided between British and French spheres of influence in the postwar settlement. Jemal Pasha immediately sent letters to Faysal and Ja'far al-Askari urging the insurgent leaders to join the Turks in a common defense of Islam, especially in the face of this Anglo-French "conspiracy" to divide and rule the Arabs. Jemal indicated that his government was prepared to grant full autonomy to the Arab provinces. The Germans supported this peace overture enthusiastically and the Arab Bureau gave it wide publicity in Syria, where it produced a certain amount of pro-Turkish sentiment.

Jemal also invited Faysal to come to Constantinople for negotiations. Faysal forwarded this message to his father at Mecca and asked the Sherif how he should reply to the Turks. The old Emir instructed his son neither to accept nor to reject their offer. The Sherif then forwarded Jemal's letter to London, asking the British Foreign Office for an explanation of the Sykes-Picot matter. The British government assured the Arabs that there was no definite agreement between Britain and France regarding the Arab countries, running contrary to the understandings reached in the earlier Husayn-McMahon correspondence, and suggested that Jemal had distorted the truth to undermine Arab-British friendship and cooperation. With this explanation, the incident was closed.

Despite the most determined efforts of the German propaganda machine in Damascus, which in the Sykes-Picot exposé had an ideal issue to exploit, the Turks failed to win over the leaders of the Arab rebellion. The memories of four centuries of Turkish arrogance, brutality, and broken promises were too strong for the Arabs to forget, and this factor—combined with a growing belief in ultimate Allied victory, at least in the Middle East—led the Arab leaders to reject all Turkish offers of autonomy within the empire. Thus fine words proved no balm for personal experience of Turkish rule, and psychological warfare proved no substitute for military success on the field of battle.

Ottomans Also Use Propaganda, But With Little Success

By contrast with the rather subtle work of the Arab Bureau, Ottoman propaganda was notoriously crude. Turkish newspapers, mere mouthpieces for official propaganda, were not only

strictly censored but were used by the government to spread false information. For example, when the Turkish Fourth Army met defeat at Suez early in the war, Jemal Pasha announced a great victory and held a three-day celebration in Damascus. By the same token, the misfortunes of the insurgents and their allies were prominently reported and their defeats wildly exaggerated.

Turkish propaganda sought to depict Sherif Husayn as a traitorous, heretical, and personally ambitious tool of Christian powers planning the destruction of Islam—charges which clashed sharply with Husayn's public image and reputation among most Arabs as a revered elder statesman. The government dismissed Husayn from all the civil and religious offices he held under the Ottoman Empire and appointed Sherif Ali Haydar Pasha in his place. Next, the government forced the ulema (religious leaders) of the empire to issue a religious decree stating that the faithful were permitted to fight Husayn, since by his rebellion the Sherif had stepped out of the community of Islam.

Official propaganda and regime-controlled religious pronouncements were never able to break Husayn's hold over the Bedouin tribes of Hijaz and later southern Syria. The only sections of the indigenous population which were favorably disposed toward Ottoman rule were the merchants and townspeople in Hijaz. Often not natives of the area, these cosmopolitans naturally leaned toward the more secular-minded Turks—whose authority was loosely exercised in this remote corner of the empire—and feared the fanatical tribal elements who enlisted under the Sherif's banner. Unfortunately for the Turks, their friends in the towns were never sufficiently organized to provide any real support for the counterinsurgent cause.

Bribery as a Weapon of War

The Ottomans made a major effort to win tribal support by bribery. Large amounts of money were put in the hands of Sherif Ali Haydar Pasha, and this enabled him to purchase the friendship of several small chieftains in Hijaz. The lion's share of Turkish gold went to Ibn Rashid, Emir of Ha'il and a traditional enemy of Sherif Husayn. The Rashidi tribesmen were the only Bedouins who brought any organized support to the Ottoman cause, but their military effectiveness was limited. The Rashidis were a source of supplies for the Turkish garrison at Medina. Another bitter enemy of Husayn, Emir Ibn Sa'ud of Nejd, was approached by the Turks, who appreciated the intense rivalry between Sa'ud and Husayn for control of Arabia; however, the British had anticipated this move in late 1915 when they had persuaded Sa'ud to sign a treaty of neutrality towards Britain's allies in Arabia. Sa'ud could therefore not come to the support of the Turks by attacking Husayn, since the latter was now an ally of the British, who controlled the eastern approaches to Nejd and paid Sa'ud a monthly subsidy to ensure his neutrality. The Ottomans had been outbid by the British, even before the Arab revolt began.

Very often the tribesmen took bribes from the Turks but later failed to live up to the military obligations they had assumed. Usually they took money from both sides. In the highly competitive bribery which developed, the British—through the Sherif—were in a position to outbid the Ottomans. The Bedouins sometimes rationalized their shifting allegiances by asserting that British gold was more shiny, having acquired a touch of piety by coming, as it usually did, through the Sherifian holy places. Thus, the Turks were outmaneuvered at almost every turn, even in this area of bribes and blandishments, which had long been an Ottoman specialty. ⁴⁶

Failures of Intelligence

The failure of the Turks to organize any significant support among the indigenous population led to great difficulties in intelligence and permitted Arab and even British agents to operate freely throughout Ottoman territory. For example, when Lawrence traveled to the Damascus area in June 1917, his famous capture by the Turks at Der'a was purely a matter of accident: a homosexual Ottoman officer in Der'a had the young and physically small British agent picked up and brought to his quarters for what could only be described as personal reasons. ⁴⁶ Although there was a price on his head, Lawrence was never recognized, but escaped and continued on his way, without the Turkish authorities having knowledge of his true mission, which was to contact Ali Riza al-Rikabi, a trusted Arab officer in the Turkish army. A member of al-'Ahd and al-Fatat, this senior Arab officer was later entrusted by the Turks to assist in the defense of Damascus before the Allied advance in 1918. When the British army approached his position, al-Rikabi surrendered his forces, apparently by prearrangement with the Allies. ⁴⁷

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

A month after the fall of Damascus and the triumphal entry into the ancient city by the victorious British and Arab troops of Allenby and Faysal, all hostilities ceased between the Allied Powers and the Ottoman Empire. On October 30, 1918, Turkey acknowledged defeat in the Armistice of Mudros. The Turkish garrison in Medina had still not surrendered, however, and its proud Ottoman commander, Gen. Fakhr al-Din Pasha, refused to honor the terms of the armistice despite the destitute condition of his garrison, which suffered over a thousand deaths from influenza. Finally the sick Fakhr was overruled by his own officers. Thus the Medina garrison of 491 officers and 7,545 men finally yielded to the besieging Arab forces of Emir Abdullah. The military phase of the Arab revolt was ended. ⁴⁸

Problems Arise in the Postwar Period To Frustrate Sherifian Hopes

The Arab revolt now entered a political phase, which was not to be so successful. For the next two years, Faysal and other Arab spokesmen tried by diplomatic means to get the Allies to

live up to their wartime promises as the Arab leaders understood them. Faysal hoped to establish a Hashemite kingdom embracing the Arab provinces of the defunct Ottoman Empire and extending Sherif Husayn's "Arab Kingdom"—which London had always more precisely termed the Kingdom of Hijaz—from Egypt to Iran and from Turkey to the shores of the Indian Ocean. The prospect of such a united Arab kingdom under the Hashemite dynasty did not find universal approval, however, even among the Arabs, and opposition immediately developed in several quarters.

France was bitterly opposed to the idea. The French had always looked upon Faysal as a British puppet, and they saw the projected Arab kingdom as a British scheme to exclude French interests from the Middle East. They reminded their British ally of the Sykes-Picot agreement which divided the Arab lands of the Ottoman Empire into British and French spheres of interest, British interests being paramount in Mesopotamia and Palestine, and France being recognized as the dominant power in northern Syria and Lebanon.

The Jewish community in Palestine also feared the formation of a unified Arab state, in which they would be a very small minority. Influential Jewish leaders in Britain reminded their government of its promise in the Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917, to support the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine after the war. Thus the Balfour Declaration, like the Sykes-Picot agreement, had to be taken into account before any promises London had made to the Arab nationalists could be kept.

In reconciling these conflicting wartime promises to their various allies, the British could take comfort in the knowledge that even the Arabs were not completely united behind the Hashemites. Emir Ibn Sa'ud of Nejd, for example, was busy consolidating a kingdom of his own in Arabia, taking advantage of the collapse of Ottoman rule to bring Asir and Ha'il under his sway. Sa'ud and the other lesser rulers of Arabia had no intention of recognizing the overlordship of the Hashemite emir, who had boldly proclaimed himself "King of the Arabs" at a time when his writ did not extend throughout his own principality of Hijaz. Personal clashes between the Sherifians and some Arab nationalists in the cities of the Fertile Crescent, which at times had marred the wartime alliance, also broke into the open in the postwar period.

The political settlement which finally emerged in the 1920's saw the British in control of Iraq (formerly Mesopotamia), Palestine, and Trans-Jordan (formerly southern Syria). The French were left in control of Lebanon and Syria—both carved out of northern Syria. Britain and France administered their areas as mandate territories assigned by the League of Nations at the San Remo conference of April 1920; however, there were great differences between British and French attitudes toward Arab aspirations for self-determination.

The British favored Jewish immigration into Palestine and the establishment there, under international auspices, of a Jewish national home as pledged in the Balfour Declaration—a policy which later came into acute conflict with Arab nationalism. But Trans-Jordan was reserved

exclusively as an Arab country and was given local autonomy under British protection after 1923. Iraq was destined to achieve its independence from Britain in the 1927-32 period, although treaty arrangements guaranteed Britain's economic and military position in the country.

The French, supported by some Lebanese and Syrian Christians and certain pro-French Muslim elements, originally intended to annex Lebanon and parts of Syria as colonies of France. The Arab nationalists, centered around Damascus, were just as determined to have complete independence. In 1919-20, these nationalists declared Syria's independence, elected Faysal king, and established an Arab government, and in July 1920 the French occupied Damascus by force.⁴³ Accepting mandate authority in lieu of outright colonial control, France was to remain in Lebanon and Syria until the end of World War II. The mandate regimes in these countries satisfied almost no one, least of all the Arab nationalists.

Only two representatives of the Sherif's Hashemite dynasty survived the political, diplomatic, and military disasters that broke over the Sherifians in this postwar period. Driven from Damascus by the French army in 1920, Faysal was installed by the British as King of Iraq in August 1921. His brother, Emir Abdullah, had been installed as Emir of Trans-Jordan a few months earlier. To the Hashemite rulers, these thrones were slight compensation for their efforts in behalf of Arab independence and unity. But worse things were in store for the dynasty. The pressure of Saudi warriors on the borders of the Hijaz grew more intense, and in 1924 Sherif Husayn abdicated in favor of his son Ali. By the end of the year, the dynasty had been driven from Mecca and the throne of Hijaz, Ibn Sa'ud absorbing both the land and crown of the Hijaz. By 1926, Saudi Arabia extended from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea.

Arab Revolt an Important Element in Final Ottoman Defeat

Although the net political result of the Arab revolt was considerably less than the nationalists had hoped for, the Turks were clearly defeated as counterinsurgents. The Arab revolt represented the culmination of one of the major pressures under which the Ottoman Empire collapsed during World War I. In this sense, the Arab insurgency facilitated Allied victory in the Middle East. Although Lawrence later tended to exaggerate the importance of the desert revolt out of proportion to its actual significance to the Allied war effort, the detractors of the Arab movement have similarly erred by denying its importance. The Arab guerrillas undoubtedly drained off Turkish troops and supplies which Allenby would otherwise have faced in Palestine. Perhaps of greater strategic importance was the fact that the revolt in the Hijaz frustrated any German effort to cut this "jugular vein" of the British Empire through the Red Sea. In sum, the desert revolt made a small but crucial contribution to Allied success in World War I. It also provided a classic case of external support and exploitation of domestic political insurgency within a highly vulnerable empire during an international conflict situation.

NOTES

- ¹George Antonius, The Arab Awakening (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1938), p. 104.
- ²Ilhaman Saab, La Verité sur la question syrienne (Istanbul: Le Commandement de la IV^{ème} Armée, 1918), pp. 228-33.
- ³*Ibid.*, pp. 234-48.
- ⁴*Ibid.*, pp. 234-48, 203.
- ⁵N. Zeino, The Struggle for Arab Independence: Western Diplomacy and the Rise and Fall of Faysal's Kingdom in Syria (Beirut: Khayat Press, 1960), pp. 80-82.
- ⁶Abdullah, Memoirs of King Abdullah of Transjordan, ed. Philip P. Graves (London: Jonathan Cape, 1950), p. 156.
- ⁷Nabih Amin Faris and Mohammed Tawfik Husayn, Crescent in Crisis (Lawrence, Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 1955), pp. 63-65.
- ⁸Abdullah, Memoirs, pp. 115-21.
- ⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 3-40.
- ¹⁰Antonius, The Arab Awakening, p. 157.
- ¹¹Abdullah, Memoirs, p. 143.
- ¹²Lt. Gen. Sir George MacMunn and Capt. Cyril Falls, Military Operations: Egypt and Palestine (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1928), pp. 225-34.
- ¹³T. E. Lawrence, Seven Pillars of Wisdom (New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1962), pp. 112-13.
- ¹⁴MacMunn and Falls, Military Operations, pp. 227, 235-36.
- ¹⁵The literature on the complex and controversial personality of T. E. Lawrence is extensive. Two noteworthy studies are Richard Aldington's Lawrence of Arabia: A Biographical Enquiry (London: Callens, 1955), and Flora Armitage's The Desert and the Stars (New York: Holt, 1955). Armitage gives a sympathetic account of Lawrence's role in the Arab movement in Chapter IV, entitled "The Wilderness," which contains many useful insights into the conditions of the period and the personalities of the participants in the insurgency. Aldington's book is highly critical of Lawrence in a systematic and painstaking attempt to clear away the fantasy and fiction which have grown up around Lawrence to produce the legendary hero familiar to readers of earlier works. These include Lowell Thomas' With Lawrence in Arabia (London: Hutchinson, 1921); Robert Graves' Lawrence and the Arabs (London: Jonathan Cape, 1927); and Capt. B.H. Liddell Hart's In Arabia and After (London: Jonathan Cape, 1934), as well as Lawrence's own writings about his Arabian exploits.
- ¹⁶Lawrence, Seven Pillars, *passim*.
- ¹⁷Abdullah, Memoirs, pp. 157-59, 166.
- ¹⁸George Arthur Lipsky, Saudi Arabia (New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, 1959), p. 144; see also, Jacques G. P. M. Benoist-Méchin, Arabian Destiny, trans. Denis Weaver (London: Elek Books, 1957), p. 131.
- ¹⁹Lawrence, Seven Pillars, pp. 69-70.

- ²⁰MacMunn and Falls, Military Operations, p. 225.
- ²¹Cyril Falls, Military Operations: Egypt and Palestine (London: His Majesty's Stationary Office, 1930), Vol. II, p. 406.
- ²²Lawrence, Seven Pillars, p. 106.
- ²³Ibid.
- ²⁴MacMunn and Falls, Military Operations, p. 337.
- ²⁵Ibid., p. 238.
- ²⁶John Connell, Wavell: Scholar and Soldier (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1961), pp. 121-45.
- ²⁷Falls, Military Operations, Vol. II, pp. 397, 405.
- ²⁸Ibid., p. 396; Lawrence, Seven Pillars, pp. 180, 228.
- ²⁹Falls, Military Operations, Vol. II, p. 396.
- ³⁰Connell, Wavell, pp. 179-80.
- ³¹Falls, Military Operations, Vol. II, p. 624.
- ³²Antonius, The Arab Awakening, pp. 142-48.
- ³³al-thawrat al-arabiyah dhid al-dawlah al-uthmaniyah (The Arab Revolt Against the Ottoman State), by Turkish army officer (no name indicated), trans. from Turkish by M. A. al-Midani (Beirut: n.p., n.d.), p. 5.
- ³⁴Antonius, The Arab Awakening, p. 202.
- ³⁵Zeine, Struggle, pp. 113-14; Amin Said, al-thawrat al-arabiyah al-kubra (The Great Arab Revolt) (Cairo: Dar Ihya al-Kutub al-Arabiyyah, 1934), Vol. I, p. 85.
- ³⁶MacMunn, Military Operations, pp. 228-50.
- ³⁷Ibid., pp. 225-26.
- ³⁸Ibid., pp. 226-27; Antonius, The Arab Awakening, pp. 195-99.
- ³⁹Lawrence, Seven Pillars, p. 180.
- ⁴⁰al-Midani (trans.), al-thawrat al-arabiyah dhid, p. 19.
- ⁴¹MacMunn, Military Operations, p. 237; Gen. Edouard Brémond, Le Hedjaz dans la guerre mondiale, pp. 18-19, cited in Aldington, Lawrence, p. 179.
- ⁴²Lawrence, Seven Pillars, p. 180.
- ⁴³al-Midani (trans.), al-thawrat al-arabiyah dhid, passim.
- ⁴⁴Falls, Military Operations, Vol. I, p. 6.
- ⁴⁵al-Midani (trans.), al-thawrat al-arabiyah dhid, pp. 25-26.
- ⁴⁶Lawrence, Seven Pillars, pp. 441-46; Aldington, Lawrence, pp. 205-207.
- ⁴⁷Antonius, The Arab Awakening, pp. 221-22.
- ⁴⁸Falls, Military Operations, Vol. II, p. 624; Abdullah, Memoirs, pp. 174-80.
- ⁴⁹For a vivid account of the last days of the Faysal regime, see Zeine's The Struggle for Arab Independence.

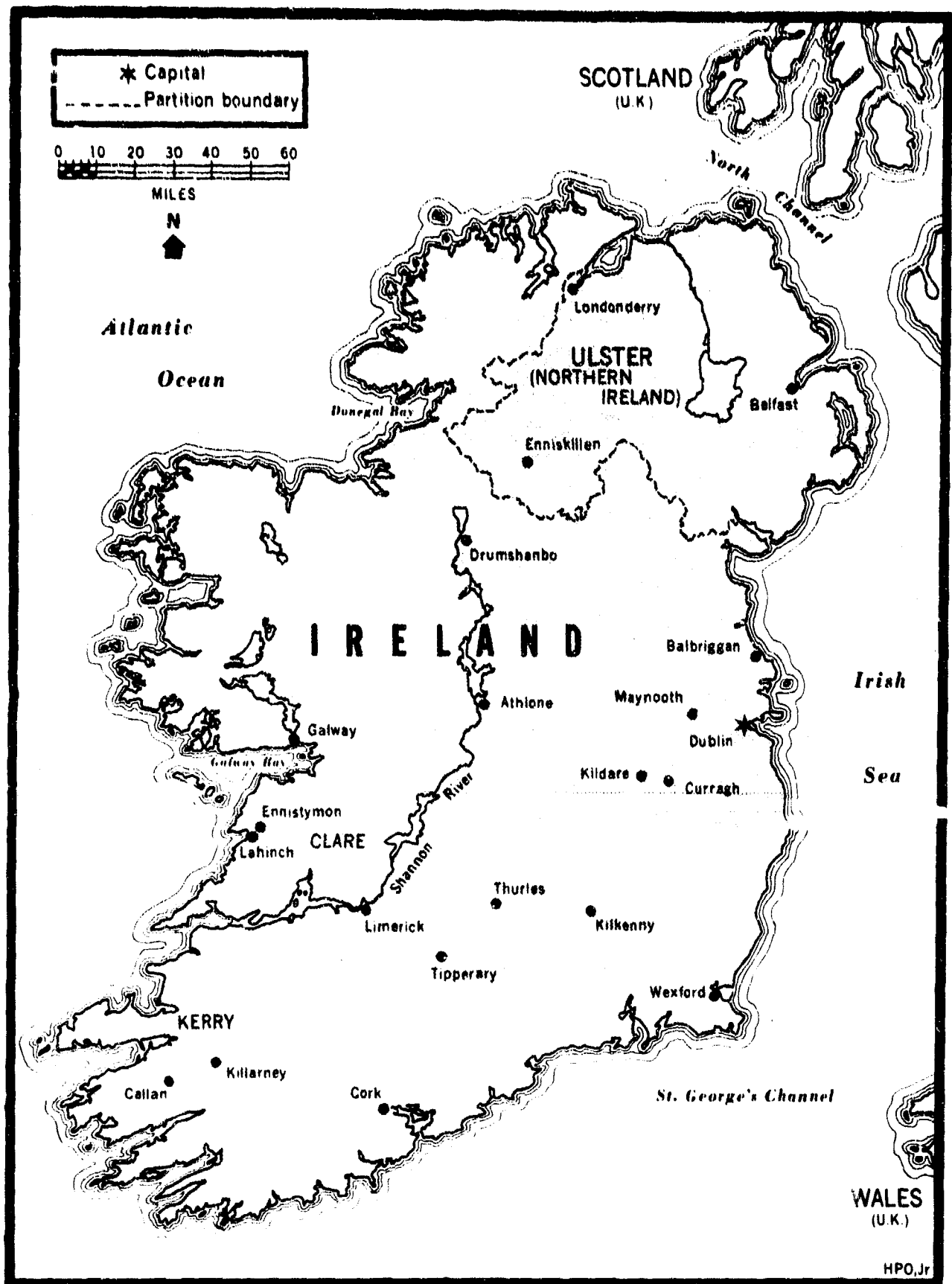
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Chapter Two

**IRELAND
1916-1921**

by D. J. Goodspeed



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The British hold on Ireland was lost, not so much by failure to put down the insurgents' Easter Rising or the ensuing guerrilla warfare, as by the public indignation that was evoked both in Ireland and England by the British resort to terrorism.

BACKGROUND

In Easter Week of 1916, when Lord Beaverbrook, the enormously influential British newspaper proprietor, heard that rebellion had broken out in Ireland, he telephoned a friend in Dublin who confirmed the report. "When did it start?" Beaverbrook demanded. "When Strongbow invaded Ireland." "When will it end?" "When Cromwell gets out of hell." That laconic telephone conversation was a concise summary of more than seven centuries of Irish history.

The English first invaded Ireland in the 12th century, but it was not until 300 years later that the country was systematically subdued. Even then, the subjugation was resisted by each successive Irish generation. The Irish resented their conquerors as aliens of another culture, as economic exploiters, and—when England under Henry VIII became a Protestant state—as religious heretics. Many factors cemented and preserved the Irish identity—the barrier of the Irish Sea, the unifying influence of the Catholic church, the revival of the Gaelic language, the universal resentment aroused by Cromwell's massacres, the establishment of an Anglo-Irish "ascendancy," the harsh penal laws against Catholics in the 18th century, and the Coercion Acts of the Victorian era.

Only in one corner of northeastern Ireland was English rule welcomed. In Ulster, Protestant (mainly Presbyterian) settlers and landlords from England and Scotland established themselves as a ruling class, more prosperous, better educated, and more privileged than the native Irish. For economic, social, and religious reasons, this portion of Ireland remained fanatically loyal to the British and correspondingly hostile to the Irish in the South.

Irish Grievances and Disasters Lead to Formation of I.R.B.

Outside Ulster, the Irish blamed the English for a long list of grievances. Throughout the 18th century Irish Catholics were denied the franchise, education, the right to buy land, and the guardianship of children. All professions except medicine were closed to them, and they were allowed no part in politics. Prime Minister William Pitt, seeking an answer to Irish unrest, promised Catholic emancipation if the Catholic bishops would support his proposal of union with Great Britain. The Act of Union was passed in 1800, but the promise of emancipation was not redeemed until 1829.

Between 1846 and 1851, a disastrous potato famine, typhus epidemics, and emigration reduced the population of Ireland from almost 8.5 to only 6.5 million.² While nearly one million Irish were dying of famine, England continued to import the bulk of Irish livestock and agricultural products, Anglo-Irish landlords evicted more than 50,000 families in one year, and scores of villages were razed.³ An armed revolt in 1848 was put down, and the oppressive policies continued.

The Irish rebels received new support in 1858, when one of the survivors of the 1848 rebellion, John O'Mahony, founded in the United States a secret society, the Irish Republican Brotherhood, or I.R.B., dedicated to the cause of Irish independence.⁴ This organization, which was supported by the powerful Irish-American society, the Clan na Gael, soon spread back to Ireland. In 1865 most Irish republican leaders, or Fenians, as they called themselves, were imprisoned, but in the next two years there were outbreaks of violence in England and Ireland, and Irish-American Fenians invaded Canada.

Harshness and Conciliation; The Issue of Home Rule

These disturbances induced Prime Minister William Gladstone in 1869 to disestablish the Protestant church in Ireland, and in 1870 a Land Act brought some reform of the more flagrant abuses of property rights. By a second Land Act in 1881, rents were reduced, and security of tenure was guaranteed. Nevertheless, the 1870's and 1880's were marked by famine, the eviction of tenants, and stern Coercion Acts which allowed British authorities to arrest and imprison without trial. Landlords treated peasants with irresponsible cruelty, and the peasants struck back by maiming cattle, burning ricks, and murdering landlords. Between 1870 and 1886 there were 130,000 evictions.⁵ Between 1870 and 1880, the British Parliament rejected 28 bills aimed at improving conditions in Ireland. By 1911, the population of Ireland was reduced to 4.4 million, while, during the same period, the population of Great Britain nearly doubled.⁶

In England itself, however, the liberal and nonconformist conscience began to stir during the last quarter of the 19th century. More important, a new Irish leader, Charles Stewart Parnell, by his policy of obstruction in the British House of Commons, did much to draw attention to Ireland's wrongs.

The major issue of contention was home rule. Gladstone introduced his first home rule bill in 1886, but fierce opposition from the Conservative party and the Orange Lodges of Ulster led to rioting and bloodshed in Belfast. The bill was defeated, and the new Conservative administration of Lord Salisbury passed the Crimes Act, empowering the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to proclaim any Irish association illegal, placing restrictions upon the press, and curtailing the right of trial by jury. Within the next three years, 5,000 persons were charged under the Crimes Act with offenses ranging from shooting at landlords to whistling seditious songs.

Despite these Draconian measures, conciliation might have been possible. In 1891 Parnell died, discredited by being named in a divorce action brought by Captain William O'Shea, and Irish party leadership went to John Redmond, a moderate of the moderates. Home rule within the British empire would have contented the great majority of the Irish people. When Gladstone introduced a second home rule bill in 1893, it passed the House of Commons, but was rejected by the House of Lords. Although Ireland as a whole disapproved of the British war against the Boers which broke out in 1899, Irish regiments fought so well in South Africa that Queen Victoria thanked them publicly. After the South African adventure, British statesmen noted with alarm the evident hostility of the continent and decided to make a serious attempt to conciliate Ireland.

Irish Extremists on Both Sides Fight Home Rule

Conciliation, however, was the last thing the Orangemen of Ulster wanted, and, in this at least, the Irish Republican Brotherhood agreed with them. Some of the intellectuals who constituted the loose grouping known as the Sinn Fein—a name meaning "We Ourselves" which was later applied to the entire insurgent movement—agreed with the brotherhood. Sinn Fein favored complete self-government rather than home rule.⁸ Under the leadership of an ardent Sinn Feiner, Tom Clarke, the I.R.B. was reorganized in 1870 along far more effective lines. A supreme council ruled the brotherhood with military discipline. Clarke dominated the supreme council and gathered around him a group of younger men, including Padraic Pearse, Joseph Plunkett, Sean MacDermott, and Eamonn Kent.⁹

After 1910, when the House of Lords lost its power to block indefinitely legislation passed by the House of Commons, home rule seemed likely to become a reality. The Liberal Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, introduced in April 1912 a third home rule bill which the Lords automatically rejected, but in the normal course of events it would have received the King's assent in 1914.

The Unionists of Ulster, led by Sir Edward Carson, reacted violently. Orange riots drove 2,000 Catholic workmen out of the Belfast shipyards in 1912; the Lodges drilled openly, purchased arms and ammunition from Germany, and threatened civil war. Some British

Conservative leaders recklessly supported the Ulster Protestants, and when British troop movements were ordered into Ulster to keep Carson's Volunteers from raiding government arms depots, a number of senior officers at the Curragh Camp resigned their commissions rather than obey.¹⁰

The Irish Form Paramilitary Forces and Plan Rebellion

It was not Ulster action, however, but labor troubles in Dublin that led in 1913 to the formation of the first openly paramilitary insurgent body in the South. James Connolly, a labor leader, and the Countess Constance Markievicz, an Irish feminist and later the first woman to be elected* to the British House of Commons, organized the Citizen Army for protection against police brutality.¹¹ Tom Clarke and the I.R.B. were soon in close touch with its leaders. Not until November 25, 1913, did Irish Nationalists, infiltrated secretly by many I.R.B. members, form their own Volunteers in answer to the Orange Lodges in the northeast. Dublin Castle at once prohibited the importation of arms and ammunition into Ireland.¹² When the Irish Volunteers landed a shipment of rifles near Dublin on July 26, 1914, British troops intervened. The Volunteers escaped with their rifles, but the soldiers fired upon a hostile crowd in Bachelor's Walk, killing three persons and wounding 32 others.¹³

The outbreak of the First World War in August 1914 changed the situation overnight. The Irish Nationalists, under Redmond, pledged their loyal support to Britain; a home rule bill was placed on the statute books, but, to placate the Ulster Unionists, a Suspensory Act postponed its operations until six months after the close of hostilities. Most of the Irish Volunteers joined the British army and went to the front, but a hard core of about 12,000 remained loyal to their republican ideals.¹⁴

On September 9, 1914, the supreme council of the I.R.B.—directing a brotherhood of perhaps only 200 to 300 members in Ireland but now in effective control of the republican Irish Volunteers and the Citizen Army—decided that Ireland should rise in arms before the war ended. England's difficulty, they believed, was Ireland's opportunity. An I.R.B. representative was sent to the United States to raise funds, a military council was created, and planning for insurrection began.¹⁵

INSURGENCY

The opening act of the Irish insurgency, planned in detail the previous January, took place in Dublin on April 24, 1916—Easter Monday. The date was supposed to have mystical significance—this was to be the day when Ireland rose from the grave of oppression. A republic was proclaimed, with Padraic Pearse its "poet-president." Some 1,100 Volunteers and about 100 men of the Citizen Army paraded with rifles, then moved off to occupy prearranged positions in

*She never took her seat, since she had pledged, as an Irish Nationalist, not to do so.

the city. An attack on Dublin Castle failed, but railway lines and telegraph wires were cut, and barricades were thrown up in the streets to block the roads leading into the capital.¹⁶

The Failure of the Easter Rising

The Easter Rising, thus begun, was to be plagued by a series of omissions and mistakes which revealed its amateur nature. Plans to obtain substantial foreign aid for their cause went totally awry. Before the rising, Sir Roger Casement, an Ulster Protestant who was also a Nationalist, had gone to Germany to solicit military aid for the insurgency and to raise a brigade from Irish prisoners of war. He had only limited success. The Germans, however, agreed to dispatch an old trawler, the Aud, to Ireland with 20,000 rifles and to make local attacks on the western front coincident with the rising. The Germans scrupulously carried out their promises. But when the Aud reached the predetermined spot on the Kerry coast, no one met her, and her captain had to scuttle her to prevent her capture by the royal navy.¹⁷ Furthermore, the British captured Casement immediately after he landed on Irish soil from a German submarine on Good Friday.¹⁸

Communication was also poor. Since I.R.B. leaders in Dublin could communicate with Germany only through the German consulate in New York City, liaison was neither close nor continuous. This difficulty may have been an advantage, however, because the British had broken the German code and had thus had warning of at least the general outline of the rebels' plans.¹⁹ Furthermore, by a strange oversight, the rebels in Dublin made no attempt to capture the telephone exchange in the city. Once they had occupied their allotted posts, they stood passively on the defensive, waiting to be attacked.

The original plan had called for 13,000 Volunteers from the countryside to attack the Curragh, Athlone, and Enniskillen garrisons in order to prevent the British from reinforcing Dublin. However, since most of these 13,000 rebels were to have been armed with German rifles from the Aud, orders had been countermanded and the situation was confused. Enthusiasm in rural areas also seems to have been less than in Dublin, with the result that there was no general rising. Some Volunteers from Kildare, Kilkenny, and Maynooth made their way into Dublin to reinforce the rebels; there were attacks on police barracks in Wexford and Galway; and in northern County Dublin a force of 48 Volunteers captured four barracks and made prisoners of 90 policemen.²⁰ The rest of Ireland remained quiet, and popular feeling by no means favored the rebels.

Casualties Add to Irish Distaste for the Violence of the Easter Rising

In Dublin there was heavy fighting for six days, and, although British superiority was obvious, the insurgents managed to inflict heavier casualties: the rebels lost 56 dead to 130 British, and had 132 wounded to 373 British. But the townspeople of Dublin, most of whom were

innocent bystanders, suffered some 3,000 casualties, 316 of them fatal, mostly from British artillery fire. Property damage was estimated at nearly \$12 million.²¹ The largest group of surviving rebels surrendered unconditionally on the afternoon of April 29. By 9 o'clock that evening, the rising was over.

The truth seems to be that the rebellion of 1916, planned and executed by men totally unfamiliar with military techniques, was an emotional rather than a rational act. Tom Clarke and the supreme council of the brotherhood had hoped that the rising in Dublin would spread throughout Ireland. Instead, the majority of the Irish were shocked and indignant at the sudden violence of the Easter Rising.

British Retaliation Breathes Life Into the Rebellion

Irish distaste for the rising was soon dispelled, however, by the harsh British suppression that followed. After Easter Week, a number of secret military trials and executions took place. Between May 3 and 12, the British shot 15 rebel leaders, including Padraic Pearse, Tom Clarke, and the wounded James Connolly, the leader of the Citizen Army, who was carried to his place of execution on a stretcher and propped up in a chair before the firing squad.²² About 2,000 Irish men and women were transported to the United Kingdom, where they were imprisoned without trial.²³ Fear, disgust, and anger transformed Irish public opinion. "Prisoners who were hissed in the streets by their fellow countrymen at the beginning of May were heroes by the end of the month."²⁴ Sinn Fein, which had been almost dead, was revived by the deaths of the Sinn Feiners.

The British jails, especially Frongoch in North Wales, proved to be schools for Irish republicanism. Here the Irish prisoners were indoctrinated with insurgent ideals, and a new class of leaders arose to replace those who had been killed in the rising or executed by the British.²⁵ Eamon de Valera, the only senior officer to survive, emerged as the undisputed leader of the Sinn Fein movement, and a young I.R.B. soldier, Michael Collins, came into prominence. When many of the prisoners were released at Christmas 1916, they returned to an Ireland that now regarded them as heroes.

Sinn Fein and I.R.B. Start New Political and Military Resistance

In the early months of 1917, the I.R.B. was reorganized, with Michael Collins on the supreme council.²⁶ Seditious newspapers were revived; the Volunteers began to drill again; and Sinn Fein began to contest and win by-elections, although the successful candidates refused to take their seats in Westminster.²⁷ De Valera, the Countess Markievicz, and the remainder of the Irish prisoners were released in June 1917. In October, when Sinn Fein held a national convention in Dublin, it was attended by 1,700 delegates from all over Ireland, and de Valera was elected president.²⁸ The convention decided that Sinn Fein would contest every Irish seat

at the next general election, and that the successful candidates would form an Irish constituent assembly.

During the winter of 1917-18, the I.R.B. organized a few raids for arms, and in April, when the British government passed a bill empowering it to impose conscription in Ireland, the Nationalist members of Parliament walked out of the House of Commons and returned home to organize resistance along with Sinn Fein.²⁹ The republicans gained popular support when the Catholic hierarchy issued a manifesto denouncing conscription. A 24-hour general strike on April 23, 1918, was observed everywhere in Ireland except Belfast.³⁰

The Irish people still hoped for home rule after the war, but the republican leaders had no confidence that the British would keep the promises they had made in the early days of the war. Michael Collins, now director of organization of the I.R.B., spent much of 1918 organizing an efficient secret service among the police, post office officials, and jail wardens.³¹

Sinn Fein Declares Irish Independence, Seeks Outside Aid, and Begins Operations

The World War I armistice in November was followed by the khaki election of December, when Sinn Fein captured 73 of the 105 Irish seats.³² Sinn Fein did not allow these representatives to go to Westminster and, on January 21, 1919, the first Irish Constituent Assembly, the Dáil Éireann, met in Dublin. It declared Irish independence, proclaimed Ireland a republic, and adopted a provisional constitution.³³

De Valera, now president of the unrecognized Irish Republic, was smuggled across the Atlantic as a stowaway to raise funds and enlist support in the United States. He was successful in both endeavors: An Irish bond loan of \$10 million was soon subscribed, and de Valera received an enthusiastic welcome in many large American cities.

Overt insurgent military operations resumed with the declaration of independence. That same day, by coincidence, nine Volunteers ambushed a group of the Royal Irish Constabulary in Tipperary and killed two policemen—the first British fatalities since Easter Week.³⁴ In the following months, violent clashes between British forces and Volunteers became more frequent.

Irish Republican Army Turns to Terrorism and Guerrilla Warfare

In April 1919, the Volunteers were reorganized into the Irish Republican Army (I.R.A.), and Cathal Brugha was given the dual appointments of Minister of Defense and Chief of Staff.³⁵ The Dáil passed a resolution "that members of the police force. . . be ostracised publicly and socially by the people of Ireland." Police agents were assassinated that summer in Dublin, and there was fighting in Clare, Tipperary, and Limerick.

Insurgent attacks on government forces soon gained momentum. Constabulary and troops were ambushed, police barracks were raided, political prisoners were freed from jails, and in

Dublin a small group of Volunteers known as "the Squad" became full-time terrorists under Collins' direction. The Squad's principal task was the execution of informers who worked for Dublin Castle, and this was done so systematically and ruthlessly that the British soon found their intelligence service almost useless.³⁶

After September 1919, when the British government suppressed the Dáil Éireann,³⁷ the violence in Ireland assumed the proportions of full-scale guerrilla war. The I.R.A. discarded the green Volunteer uniforms that had been worn during Easter Week and fought in civilian clothes. At this time, the chief military aims of the rebels were to obtain arms and ammunition from their enemies, to destroy by terror and assassination the government's intelligence network, and to build up the Irish Republican Army.³⁸

Irish Set Up an Underground Government and Attack Selected Targets

Concurrently, the outlawed Dáil undertook certain agricultural reforms, administered relief to distressed areas, established consulates abroad, published a daily bulletin which was circulated both in Ireland and in foreign capitals, and began to set up a complete judicial system to administer the law in place of the ordinary British courts.³⁹ Although an attempt to assassinate the viceroy, Field Marshal John Denton French, failed on December 19, 1919, the British no longer had effective control of Ireland.⁴⁰ By the end of 1919, an estimated 70 percent of the Irish electorate wanted to sever the tie with Britain and to establish an independent republic.

Throughout 1920, the Anglo-Irish "war" continued at an increasing tempo. Easter was marked by the insurgents' burning of nearly 100 inland revenue offices all over the country. Coast guard stations, courthouses, and occasionally the private homes of British sympathizers were also put to the torch.⁴¹ The targets selected were generally those whose destruction would hamper the British administration without injuring the economy of Ireland. Although it was not a target, the transportation system suffered, because railwaymen frequently refused to run trains with police or soldiers aboard. Many branch lines were closed down entirely.

Michael Collins' main efforts were still concentrated against the Royal Irish Constabulary, which had been augmented by specially recruited British known as the "Black and Tans" and by Auxiliary Police. During 1920, a total of 176 policemen were killed and 118 wounded,⁴² but it was distaste for their duties rather than fear of violence that caused large numbers of Irish members of the constabulary to resign. On June 28, some 200 men of the old Irish regiment, the Connaught Rangers, stationed in India, mutinied and demanded the withdrawal of British forces from Ireland.⁴³

By midsummer 1920, the I.R.A. was operating in flying columns throughout the country, as well as laying innumerable small ambushes. Their success was such that smaller police barracks were evacuated, and it was unsafe for British troops or police to move except in relatively large bodies. One of the most effective blows struck by the insurgents in 1920 took place on the

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"Bloody Sunday" of November 21, when they assassinated 14 principal British secret service agents, discovered by Collins' spies in the Post Office Department in Dublin.⁴⁴ Toward the end of the year, Cathal Brugha decided the I.R.A. should carry the war into England, and there followed an outbreak of bombings, sabotage, and arson. In Liverpool, 15 warehouses were set afire on a single night.⁴⁵

Public Sympathy Mounts in the English-Speaking World

The insurgents also made effective use of passive resistance as a means of gaining external support, even in the country of the enemy. Hundreds of suspects who had been incarcerated in Irish jails without trial went on hunger strikes; they were released when a general strike in their support was threatened. When Terence MacSwiney, the Lord Mayor of Cork, was allowed to die in Brixton Gaol in England after a hunger strike lasting 74 days, his death shocked Britain as well as Ireland.⁴⁶

The Irish struggle for independence was now receiving mounting support in the United States and within England itself. During the winter of 1920-21, the White Cross relief organization raised about \$5 million for Ireland, most of it in the United States, but some in England and Scotland.⁴⁷ In Britain, the Labour party, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Liberal newspapers, and even some Conservative members of Parliament attacked the government.

Michael Collins Rejects British Overtures; The Irish Tie Down 70,000 British Forces

Peace would probably have been made in 1920, if it had not been that de Valera was still in the United States and that, after the arrest of Arthur Griffith, the intransigent Michael Collins had become Acting President of the Dáil. Collins' policy was the same as Clemenceau's a few years earlier—"Je fais la guerre."⁴⁸

During the first six months of 1921, the attacks by flying columns increased, and all operations were coordinated by the I.R.A.'s Dublin headquarters. Between January 1 and April 30, the bodies of 73 Irish informers were found on the roadsides, each bearing the placard "a warning to spies."⁴⁹ On May 25, the I.R.A. burned the Dublin Customs House with all its files and documents, having first put most of the Dublin fire brigade out of commission by tampering with the firetrucks.⁵⁰

Collins never had more than 1,500-3,000 men actively employed in the I.R.A.,⁵¹ but this force, aided by the cooperation of the great majority of the population, had foiled all the efforts of 70,000 British troops and police to re-establish British rule in Ireland.

On June 22, 1921, King George V, long distressed by conditions in Ireland, courageously visited Belfast, where he made a public plea for peace: Within a week Lloyd George suggested a truce to de Valera, who had by now returned from the United States.⁵² After brief negotiations

In Dublin, a truce went into effect at noon on July 11, and the military phase of the insurgency was over.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

When the rising broke out on Easter Monday, 1916, the British quickly dispatched two additional brigades and artillery to reinforce their 2,000 troops in Dublin. British fighting in the capital was tactically inefficient. On the first day of the rising, a troop of lancers was sent cantering toward the general post office, where the insurgents were ensconced; elsewhere in the city, massed British frontal assaults were broken by well-aimed rifle fire. Although the British were able to crush several rebel outposts on Tuesday, they made no impression on the main republican defenses.

On Wednesday morning the British sent a gunboat, the Helga, up the River Liffey to shell a portion of the city. Two battalions of the 178th Infantry Brigade, the 7th and 8th Sherwood Foresters, marched blindly into deadly crossfire near the Mount Street bridge and lost 20 officers and 216 other ranks (about half of the total British casualties during the rising) before they overwhelmed the defenders,⁵³ who numbered fewer than 130 men.⁵⁴

The suppression of the Easter Rising was never in doubt. By the third day, it had degenerated into a number of separate British sieges of insurgent positions. The British had plentiful artillery and ammunition, a secure system of supply, and the sympathy of most of the Irish public; they also outnumbered the rebels by about ten to one. By April 28, the insurgents were almost out of ammunition; their forces had been thinned by casualties; the center of Dublin was in ruins from artillery shells; and the British were relentlessly pressing. Rebel headquarters in the post office caught fire and had to be evacuated. Although Lt. Gen. Sir John Maxwell had been hurriedly sent from England to stamp out the rebellion, it was Brig. Gen. W.H.M. Lowe who accepted the unconditional surrender of the rebels on Saturday, April 29, 1916.⁵⁵

Punitive Measures by the British Recreate the Rebellion

The British, engaged in a life-and-death struggle against Germany, were determined to deal especially harshly with Irish rebels. Ireland was placed under martial law, and a total of 3,149 men and 77 women were arrested—more than three times the number of rebels who had taken part in the rising.⁵⁶ Of these, military courts condemned 97 to death, 73 to penal servitude, and 6 to imprisonment with hard labor; more than 2,000 persons were deported to England.⁵⁷ Of the senior Irish officers among the rebels, only de Valera escaped execution, probably because he had been born in the United States. As a wave of protest against the executions swept England, the United States, and the British dominions, Prime Minister Asquith ordered an end to the killings. But Sir Roger Casement, who had been captured after landing in Ireland from a German submarine, was hanged in England on August 3.

Under these measures, Ireland lay sullen and apparently peaceful, but in fact a profound change had taken place. "The grass," an old proverb says, "soon grows over a battlefield, but never over a scaffold." By their deaths, the Irish rebels had awakened a deep sense of nationalism in their countrymen. Henceforth, the British in Ireland were regarded as the troops of an unfriendly foreign occupying power, and the Irish bided their time. By March 1919, most of the Irish prisoners had been released, but it was soon apparent that the British Parliament had no intention of keeping the promise to grant home rule. By autumn, Ireland was again in revolt.

As Rebellion Continues, the British Impose Martial Law and Resort to Counterterrorism

On December 22, 1919, Lloyd George introduced his Better Government of Ireland bill, by which he proposed to partition Ireland, retaining six counties in northeastern Ulster as an integral part of the United Kingdom.⁵⁸ The proposed legislation did not change Irish attitudes, and in January 1920, Dublin Castle placed under martial law three counties where disturbances had taken place. Country fairs and markets were forbidden in these areas. A number of republican candidates in local elections were arrested, and arrests were frequently made for such crimes as seditious conversation and the possession of seditious literature. When a police constable was assassinated in Thurles in County Tipperary on January 20, police and soldiers sacked the town, throwing hand grenades into the newspaper office and "shooting up" private homes.⁵⁹ No casualties resulted at Thurles, but reprisals were soon to become more deadly.

The British government found it politically inadvisable to admit that open rebellion existed in Ireland, since it had just fought a costly war for the stated purpose of extending democracy and the right of national self-determination. On instructions from England, therefore, Dublin Castle attempted to treat the rebellion in Ireland as a police matter. Rewards were posted for wanted insurgents; curfews were imposed; and night raids on the homes of suspects were carried out regularly. There were over 4,000 such raids in February, but they resulted in only 296 arrests.⁶⁰ These methods were ineffective, and the British inevitably found themselves adopting the same terroristic tactics as the insurgents. Since the British could not, in the nature of things, select their targets with the same discrimination, the end result was only to harden public opinion against them. On February 24, Winston Churchill informed the House of Commons that it would be necessary to maintain 45,000 soldiers in Ireland during 1920.⁶¹

During that year, counterterrorism became the primary British tactic. Unofficial murder by government forces was one way the tactic was implemented. When Thomas MacCurtain, the Lord Mayor of Cork, was murdered in his home by a gang of masked gunmen on March 19, the coroner's jury brought in a verdict of willful murder against the Royal Irish Constabulary,

"officially directed by the British Government."⁶² This was the first of many instances of Sinn Feiners being shot out of hand by the police, but there is no evidence that the murder of MacCurtain was ordered by the government. During the last two weeks of March, the police committed at least four other murders in various parts of southern Ireland.

Leadership and Organisation of British Security Forces

The executive at Dublin Castle was reorganized at about this time, and several officials opposed to the policy of reprisals were replaced. At the end of March, Gen. Sir Nevil Macready was appointed commander in chief of the forces in Ireland with the task of "stamping out rebellion with a strong hand." Sir Hamar Greenwood was appointed chief secretary, and Major General H. H. Tudor was put in charge of the Constabulary.⁶³ Lord French remained viceroy.

In March 1920, the first of the Black and Tans arrived in Ireland. The members of this force, specially recruited for the work on hand, were officially reinforcements for the Constabulary, but were actually to be employed in reprisal operations. A similar force, known as the "Auxiliaries," was recruited entirely from ex-officers of the British army. By early summer, some 1,500 Black and Tans and Auxiliaries had been sent to Ireland, and the British military forces were reinforced by eight battalions.⁶⁴

Reprisals Grow in Nature and Extent

By the end of June, 15 reprisal raids had been carried out against towns in Ireland, and an undetermined number of insurgents had been killed. Among civilians, 13 had been accidentally slain, 5 deliberately murdered, and 172 wounded. Four British soldiers and 56 policemen were killed during the same time.⁶⁵

As usual, events in Ulster complicated an already desperate situation. On July 12, 1920, after listening to inflammatory speeches, an Orange mob burned and looted the Catholic quarter of Londonderry while the military made no attempt to interfere. On July 20, the anti-Catholic pogrom was extended to Belfast, and before the end of the month thousands of Catholic laborers and their families were driven out of Ulster. By the end of August, 5,000 Catholic workmen had been expelled from Belfast alone.⁶⁶

In the summer of 1920, organized reprisals were initiated against the economy of Ireland. The Black and Tans and the Auxiliaries began to burn cooperative creameries, mills, and bacon factories. Over a hundred cooperatives were destroyed. Now, too, when house raids failed to produce the specific insurgent sought, a member of his family was frequently murdered in his stead.⁶⁷

On August 9, royal assent was given to The Restoration of Order in Ireland Act, which gave British military authorities extraordinary powers of arrest and imprisonment and enabled the

Lord Lieutenant to suppress coroners' inquests.⁶⁸ On September 3, 1920, coroners' inquests were abolished in 10 of the 26 counties and replaced by military courts of inquiry. During September, Balbriggan, Galway, Drumshanbo, Lahinch, and Ennistymon were sacked by police and soldiers, many of whom were drunk at the time from loot obtained in public houses.⁶⁹

When Michael Collins had 14 British secret agents assassinated on November 21, reprisals were carried out the same afternoon. A group of Black and Tans opened fire on a crowd watching a football match at Croke Park, Dublin. Twelve persons were killed and 60 wounded, and several hundred more were injured in the rush to escape.⁷⁰ That evening, three I.R.A. men were arrested and taken to Dublin Castle where they were shot by Auxiliaries "while trying to escape."⁷¹ In the month of November, 33 Irish civilians were killed by crown forces, apart from the Irish Volunteers killed in action.⁷²

Defection and Indignation Follow Atrocities

Some reaction was bound to set in. In the south the wave of counterterrorism had already proved too much for many Irish members of the Royal Irish Constabulary. Small mutinies and resignations became more frequent, and by midsummer no more Irish recruits for the R.I.C. were obtainable.⁷³ In August, Sir Hamar Greenwood told the House of Commons that 556 constables and 313 magistrates had resigned during the past two months.⁷⁴

As the counterterror increased, the British government found itself the target of mounting criticism, especially from the United States and from Labour, Liberal, and Christian groups in England. The murders of an eight-year-old girl, Annie O'Neill, in Dublin on November 13, and of a priest, Father Michael Griffin, whose body was found in a Galway bog, intensified this reaction.⁷⁵ Some British authorities in Ireland were also revolted by what they saw. By November 1, 1920, Brig. Gen. F. P. Crozier, the commander of the Auxiliaries, had dismissed 50 of his men for brutality, but on that date his powers of discipline were sharply curtailed. Crozier resigned shortly afterwards.⁷⁶

An Attempt at Negotiation

When Lloyd George's Better Government of Ireland bill passed the Commons on November 11, 1920, the Labour party demanded that the British army of occupation be withdrawn from Ireland, that the Dáil be allowed to draw up an Irish constitution, and that this be accepted if minority rights were guaranteed.⁷⁷ At this time, of the 68 Sinn Féin members of Parliament elected to Westminster, only 2 were still at liberty: 10 had been sentenced to death, 21 to penal servitude, and the remainder had been imprisoned without trial.⁷⁸

In December, Archbishop Clune, of Perth, Australia, who had been the senior Catholic chaplain of the Australian army during the war, acted as mediator between Lloyd George in London and Arthur Griffith, the Acting President of the Irish Republic, in Mountjoy jail, Dublin.

Nothing came of these negotiations, because Lloyd George still believed he could subdue Ireland by force. His terms for peace at this time included partition, the dropping of the Irish demand for secession from the United Kingdom, and guarantees for British naval and military security in case of foreign war.

Continued Violence; Casualties

Meanwhile, reprisals and terrorism continued unabated. On December 11, the Auxiliaries and the Black and Tans burned the city of Cork, looted its business district, and opened fire on the firemen who turned out to fight the flames.⁷⁹ Sir Hamar Greenwood declared that the Irish themselves had burned Cork, and English insurance companies refused to pay claims. After several British troop convoys had been ambushed in December, an order was issued that all government lorries would in the future carry Irish hostages.⁸⁰ On December 20, 1920, General Macready attempted to check the violence of crown forces by forbidding offenses against persons and property, but this order proved ineffective. On the 23rd, police at Calian murdered a woman; and, on the 26th, the Black and Tans invaded a dancehall, killing 5 men and wounding 17.⁸¹

During 1920, crown forces suffered casualties of 303 killed and 369 wounded. Republican army casualties are not known, but 203 Irish civilians were killed, including 6 women and 12 children.⁸²

The Conflict Becomes Unpalatable to Both Sides

The final six months of the Anglo-Irish conflict, from January to June 1921, saw no improvement in the situation. The sterile policy of police terrorism continued, with diminishing effectiveness insofar as the Irish Republican Army was concerned. The British had no idea of how to cope with the situation effectively. Prevented from all-out war and police-state methods by world opinion and their own proclaimed principles, they could find no way to identify and destroy a non-uniformed, indigenous enemy who enjoyed the complete support of the local population. Every reprisal against Irish civilians made negotiated settlement more difficult, and it was far too late for any moderate policy of conciliation and reform to succeed.

Winston Churchill, Secretary of State for the Colonies, estimated that to subdue Ireland, 100,000 new special troops and police would have to be raised and that a system of concentration camps, blockhouses, and barbed wire would have to be set up, similar to that used to subdue the Boers in South Africa.⁸³ By now, even Lloyd George realized that such a solution could not be the basis for a permanent settlement.

The Irish had thus succeeded in their strategy of making British occupation too expensive and too unpleasant to be continued. Irish and a good measure of world opinion, including British

*See Vol. III, Chapter 3, "South Africa (1899-1902)."

and American, now supported their drive toward independence. But the I.R.A. still faced a total of 70,000 soldiers and police, and the Irish too were weary of reprisals and war. Both sides were now prepared to negotiate; a truce came into effect on July 11, and a peace conference opened in London on the 14th.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

The Irish people were heartily glad to see the end of terror and counterterror. Economically, Ireland had sustained grave damage. Whole towns suffered from industrial stagnation, more than 200,000 acres of farmland went out of cultivation, cities were in ruins, many dairies and creameries were destroyed, the transportation system was disrupted, and 130,000 workers were unemployed. Normal trade patterns were overturned; exports had virtually ceased.⁸⁴

British delegates took full advantage of this war weariness in the peace negotiations that followed the truce. The peace talks dragged on until December 1921, when Lloyd George presented the Irish delegates with the alternatives of agreeing to his terms or facing a full-scale renewal of the war. England's terms were accepted, and a peace treaty was signed on December 6. It established the Irish Free State, with dominion status within the British Commonwealth. The 26 Catholic counties were given a large measure of independence. Ulster was to decide whether it would join the dominion.

Irish Extremists Fight Peace Terms

Unfortunately, this did not end Ireland's troubles, for extreme Irish republicans refused to accept the treaty, on the grounds that dominion status was only a halfway house on the road to freedom. Between April 1922 and April 1923, they fought a fierce civil war in the hope of achieving the republic. The republicans lost the war, largely because of considerable military aid given by Britain to the pro-treaty party.

After de Valera became president of the Free State in 1932, he used every available tactic of political harassment to loosen the Anglo-Irish tie. In 1937 he introduced a new constitution that appeared to be that of a completely independent country—one "the Irish people would themselves choose if Britain were a million miles away."⁸⁵

Complete Independence Arrives But Does Not End the Legacy of Bitterness

British reactions were only the faintest echo of what they had been after Easter 1916. By 1937, in a world which had changed greatly, the British government was prepared to accept peaceably a development which only 16 years earlier it had resisted with the Black and Tans. Some unregenerate Tories growled angrily in their clubs, but the majority of the British people wished Ireland well. Perhaps the tragedy was that they always had. Finally, in 1949, more

than 30 years after the Easter Rising, the Independent Republic of Ireland was formally inaugurated, and ties with the British Commonwealth were severed.

Unfortunately, the deep psychological scars left by the Anglo-Irish war have not entirely disappeared. Ireland was neutral in the Second World War, remains suspicious of alliances to which Great Britain is a party, and is generally reluctant to follow any British lead in the United Nations. Future generations may forgive and forget the events of 1916-21, but by and large Irish men and women who lived through "the troubles" have not yet done so.

The partitioning of Ireland, moreover, has left grave difficulties in the wake of the British withdrawal. Until 1964, the I.R.A. survived as an outlawed force, and perhaps an underground brotherhood still exists. Certainly sporadic violence occurs, but it seems unlikely that Irish irredentist sentiment will seriously endanger the peace.

This case of counterinsurgency has also dramatized an important military lesson—that a civilized and democratic nation seeking to put down rebellion must consider its own ethical and moral tradition as much as the military capacity of the insurgents when choosing its tactics and estimating its chance of success. For surely the revulsion that the terror brought to both the British and the Irish people, reared alike to respect human life, affected the eventual outcome far more than did the handful of rebels who seized the Dublin Post Office on Easter Monday of 1916.

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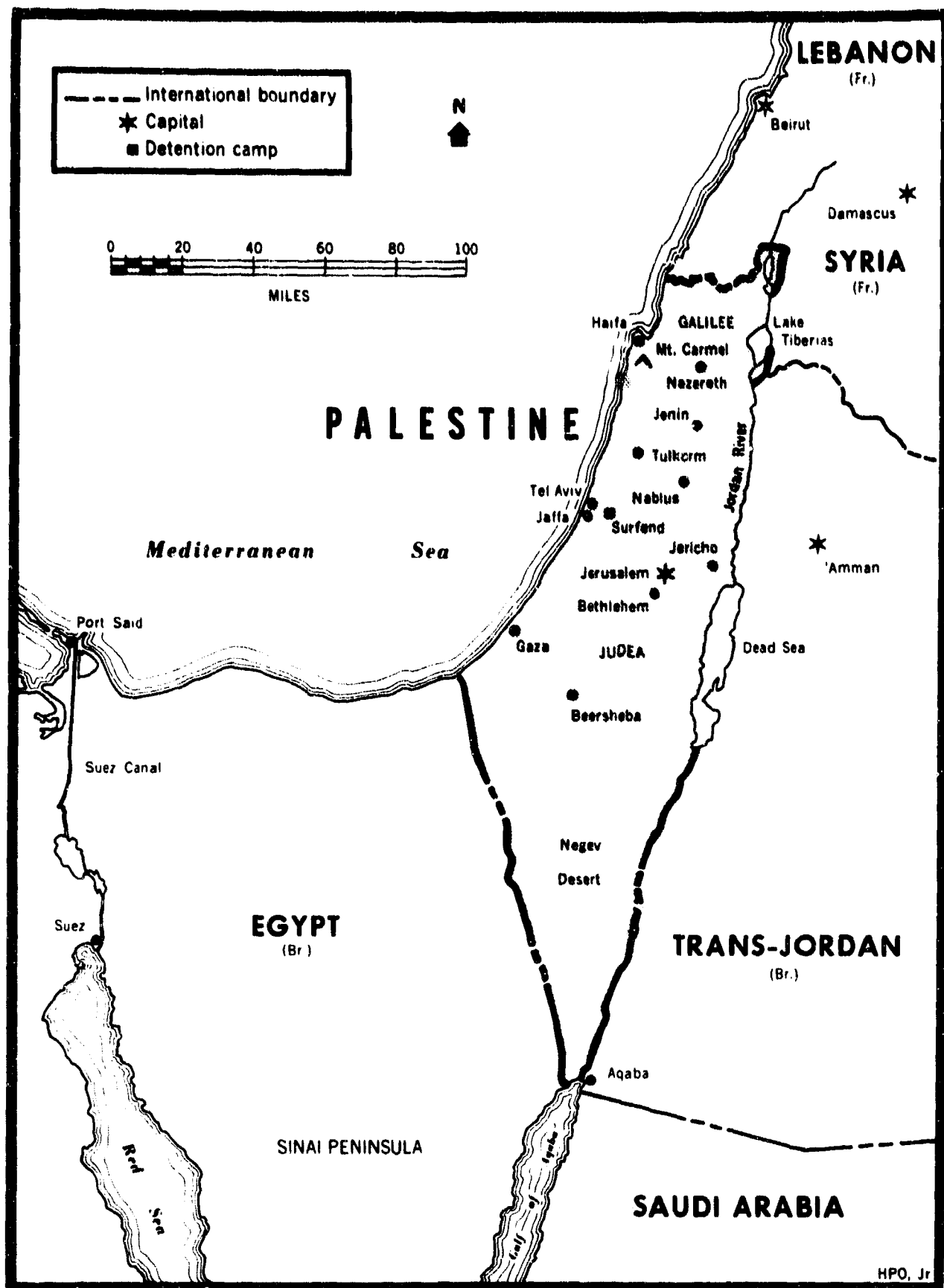
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Chapter Three

**PALESTINE
1933-1939**

by Abdul Majid Abbass



PALESTINE (1933-1939)

HPO, Jr

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PALESTINE (1933-1939)

by Abdul Majid Abbas

Unable to achieve a political settlement acceptable to both the Arab majority and the Jewish minority communities in Palestine, the British used massive police action and military measures to maintain governmental authority in the mandate territory.

BACKGROUND

The insurrection that took place in Palestine during the 1930's was the major one in a series of explosive reactions by the Arab population against British rule and Britain's endeavor to promote the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine. Other deep-rooted historical factors, new local developments, and worldwide forces of various weights and significance had their bearing on the struggle, but they did not alter its central theme.

Although the geographical expression "Palestine" has been defined differently at different times, it applied at this time to that part of southern Syria west of the Jordan River which was administered by Great Britain under the terms of the League of Nations mandate established in 1920. A holy land for Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike, Palestine was bounded on the north by the French-held mandate of Syria, made up of present-day Lebanon and Syria; on the east by the nominally independent emirate of Trans-Jordan, which was virtually a British protectorate; on the south by Egypt, which at this time was also under British control; and on the west by the Mediterranean Sea. Palestine comprised some 10,400 square miles, being slightly smaller than Belgium or the state of Maryland. Within this small territory there was a great variety of terrain and climate. Arid deserts contrasted with fertile valleys, plains with mountains, and lakes with seaside.

The climate of the coastal and central plains of Palestine is generally Mediterranean, hot and dry in summer and warm and wet in winter. It is temperate in Jerusalem and the hill country of Judea and Galilee, where the peaks range between 2,500 and 3,500 feet. In the Negev Desert and in the Jordan Valley, the lowest place in the world, the climate is subtropical. Rainfall varies from an average of 30 inches in the hills of Galilee and Mount Carmel to a few inches in the Negev region and only one inch in the deepest south.¹

The Peoples of Palestine and Their Economic Condition

Palestine's population was overwhelmingly Arab and Sunni Muslim by religion, although it included important Jewish and Christian minorities. Substantial Jewish immigration during the mandate period noticeably modified the composition of the population. In 1920, the total population was 673,000, of whom 67,000 or 10 percent were Jews;¹ in 1933, when the population totaled 1,141,000, some 235,000 or slightly more than 20 percent were Jews. From 1933 to 1936, the Muslim population dropped from 70 to 63 percent, while the Jewish population grew from under 21 to over 28 percent.²

Agriculture was the backbone of the Palestinian economy and the dominant occupation. Although there was a growing tendency toward urban expansion and rural migration to the urban centers, there were as yet in the 1930's only four towns with populations above 80,000—Jerusalem (143,800), Tel Aviv (143,200), Haifa (116,400), and Jaffa (86,900).³ More than 72 percent of the Muslim population were peasants, living in small agricultural communities.⁴ There were also the nomads—more than 66,000 in 1931—who enjoyed certain grazing rights.

Traditionally there had been a Palestinian aristocracy made up mostly of Arab landowners who lived on the land and were closely attached to it,⁵ as well as a number of non-Palestinian landowners who were absentee landlords. By the 1930's, the Arab landlord class had been greatly reduced in numbers through the sale of land to Jewish immigrants who were able to pay good prices for it.⁶

In this process many peasants were displaced. Some remained in the rural areas and were estimated by Sir John Hope Simpson in 1930 as making up 29 percent of the Arab families in the villages,⁷ but a large number drifted into the towns.⁸ Swelling the ranks of unskilled labor, they were exposed to the acute strains of unemployment and appalling living conditions. According to one authority, there were, in 1935, "some 11,000 landless Arabs living in huts made of rusty petrol tins" in the port town of Haifa.¹⁰

The Arabs View Palestine as an Arab Entity Guaranteed by Allied Promises

The Arab insurgency in Palestine is only understood after a look at the interaction of Arab, Jewish, British, and other interests in the Middle East during this period. Palestinian Arabs, like Arabs elsewhere in the area, looked upon Palestine simply as "southern Syria" and considered it an integral part of the Arab world.¹¹ The Arabs believed that the Allies (Great Britain and France) had promised them full independence from the Ottoman Turkish Empire when they joined the Allied cause in 1916—and that Palestine was intended as an area for future Arab independence.

They based their belief on such things as the famous World War I correspondence between Sherif Husayn of Mecca and the British High Commissioner in Egypt, Sir Henry MacMahon: U. S. President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points, which emphasized the right of self-determination; and the Anglo-French Proclamation of 1918 that reiterated Allied aims as "the complete and

definite freeing of the peoples so long oppressed by the Turks and the establishment of national governments and administrations deriving their authority from the initiative and free choice of the indigenous population." During World War I, British airplanes had carried out a propaganda campaign in Palestine on this basis by dropping the proclamations of Sherif Husayn* calling on the population to join the fight "for the liberation of all Arabs from Turkish rule so that the Arab Kingdom may again become what it was during the time of your fathers."¹²

After World War I, the Arabs saw their hopes for national unity and self-determination dashed, when the British and French staked out spheres of interest in the Middle East and Arab leaders began to squabble among themselves over the future of the Arab world. France ruled in Lebanon and Syria through the mandate system set up by the League of Nations, while Great Britain exercised mandates over Iraq and Palestine. Although nominally independent, Egypt, Trans-Jordan, and the sheikdoms of the Arabian peninsula were under varying degrees of British control. Frustrated by European domination and the inability of their leaders to compose their differences once independence from Turkey had been won, the Arabs felt betrayed by the Allies—particularly with regard to Palestine, where the British government was now committed to promoting the establishment of a national home for the Jews.

The Jews View Palestine as a "National Home" Guaranteed by the Balfour Declaration

Jewish interest in Palestine as the Promised Land to which Jews could return from other parts of the world had begun to develop around the end of the 19th century. Appearing first in Russia and Eastern Europe, where anti-Semitism was then strongest, the Zionist movement, as Jewish nationalism came to be known, aimed at the creation of first a Jewish national home and eventually a Jewish state.

The so-called territorialist Zionist parties advocated Jewish emigration to an area more suitable for Jewish colonization than they thought Palestine to be.¹³ On the other hand, the Zionist International Congress held at Basel, Switzerland, in 1897 under the leadership of Theodor Herzl defined the aim of the Zionist movement as the achievement of "a home for the Jewish people secured under public law in Palestine."¹⁴ Although advocacy of a Jewish state in the early stages of the mandate was generally avoided except by an extreme wing of Zionism called the Revisionists, under the leadership of Vladimir Jabotinsky, there was little doubt that the ultimate Zionist aim would be the creation of such a state. Since this could not be done in Palestine except at the expense of that country's Arab population, the stage was set for conflict between Arabs and Zionists.¹⁵

During World War I the Zionists won a major diplomatic victory in the famous Balfour Declaration of November 2, 1917, when the British government, after consultation with France and

*See Chapter One, "Arabia (1916-1918)."

the United States, promised to support the establishment in Palestine of a Jewish national home, with the understanding that "nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine."¹⁶ Three-way negotiations between Allied representatives and Zionist and Arab leaders were unable to reconcile the Arabs to the Balfour Declaration's plans for Palestine, and the Arab community remained as implacably opposed to the idea of the Jewish national home as the Zionists were intent on its implementation. Despite Arab protests, a British mandate government of Palestine confirming the purpose and content of the Balfour Declaration was set up at the Conference of San Remo on April 25, 1920, and approved by the Council of the League of Nations on July 22, 1922.¹⁷

Various motives have been suggested in explanation of the British pledge to the Zionists and their support of a Jewish national home in Palestine. These included the desire to win support from Russian and American Jews for the Allied war effort or to influence the attitude of German Jews, as well as humanitarian sympathy toward a persecuted race, religious considerations derived from Protestant familiarity with the Old Testament, and even gratitude to Zionist leader Dr. Chaim Weizmann, who helped the Allied war effort by inventing a new method of producing acetone.¹⁸ In addition, British strategic interest seemed to be served by such a policy.

Considerations Underlying British Policy on Palestine

In an age when the British Empire seemed to possess eternal validity, those who thought in such terms could not fail to observe that Palestine was as important as Egypt from the point of view of British imperial communications. Palestine could serve as a military post for the protection of the Suez Canal, as a terminus to the oil pipeline from Iraq, as a link in the international air route to India, and as a starting point for the overland route which connects Iraq with the Mediterranean.¹⁹ Since the Zionists favored the establishment of a British protectorate over Palestine as the best means of promoting a Jewish national home,²⁰ Zionist plans seemed to coincide with British strategic interests at this stage.

Advocates of the imperial interest later argued that, in view of changing world conditions, some kind of permanent political alliance between Palestine and Great Britain was necessary once the mandate came to an end. It was noted that Palestine was not only an outpost for the defense of Suez but might also provide an alternative to that waterway, and that an Arab Palestine without the Jews would be weak and therefore of little strategic use to Great Britain. It was even mentioned that crown colony status for Palestine might ensure security and order and "if Crown Colony status did not satisfy everyone, a solution providing for Crown Colony status for twenty or thirty years to be followed by Dominion status might be acceptable."²¹

These strategic and imperial considerations were reinforced by strong humanitarian and religious sentiments. There was a general Christian feeling, especially in Roman Catholic circles, that the Christian holy places of Palestine ought to be under Christian political control,

or at least under some sort of international jurisdiction. Moreover, there was a widespread humanitarian view in Europe and America that Palestine was the logical site for a Jewish national home, and liberal European and American statesmen and anti-Semitic national leaders alike saw in Jewish emigration to Palestine a solution to the age-old Jewish problem. This idea gained wide support in the 1930's when increasingly bad treatment of Jews in Germany and central Europe made their position precarious.²²

Allied statesmen, who were often on close personal terms with prominent Jews and Zionist spokesmen in their own countries, were profoundly ignorant of the depth and intensity of Arab nationalism in the Middle East, a phenomenon familiar to only a handful of Western scholars and Orientalists at this time. The Allied governments "apparently thought of the Arabs of Palestine (in so far as they were aware of their existence) as mere Bedouin, as little worthy of consideration as the American Indians, the Bantu, or any other politically unorganized and inarticulate race of 'natives,' whose destiny it was to give place to the colonization of more 'progressive' peoples."²³ Such attitudes permitted the misleading Zionist slogan, "The people without a land for a land without a people," to go unchallenged in the non-Arab world.

Basic Question for Palestine Government Is Jewish Immigration

Following an outbreak of communal riots in the spring of 1920, the British government replaced its military administration in Palestine by a civil administration. On July 1, 1920, Sir Herbert Samuel, a Liberal statesman of Jewish faith and sympathetic to the Zionists, was appointed as Great Britain's first High Commissioner* to the mandate territory.²⁴ In August, the Palestine government promulgated its first immigration ordinance, setting the conditions for Jewish immigration and fixing the first annual quota at 16,500.²⁵ The question of Jewish immigration quotas was hereafter to become basic to Arab-British difficulties.

The Zionist Organization was recognized by the League of Nations as the appropriate Jewish public body to advise and work with the Palestine government in economic, social, and other matters affecting the establishment of the Jewish national home and the interests of the Jewish population in Palestine. Arrangements were made in 1928-29 to include both Zionist and non-Zionist Jews in a Jewish Agency for Palestine, headed by Dr. Chaim Weizmann, who remained chairman of the Zionist Organization. A Standing Executive Committee of the Jewish Agency was headed by David Ben Gurion, and this body established a Foreign Department, headed by Moshe Shertock.²⁶ Through these and other Zionist-controlled organizations and bodies, the Jewish community in Palestine developed what has been described as a quasi-government during the mandate period.

*British High Commissioners for Palestine during the interwar period included Sir Herbert Samuel (1920-25), Lord Plumer (1925-28), Sir John Chancellor (1928-31), Sir Arthur Wauchope (1931-38), and Sir Harold McMichael (1938-44). (Abdullah, Memoirs of King Abdullah of Transjordan (London: Jonathan Cape, 1950), pp. 227-28).

Arab Leaders Oppose Jewish Immigration and Seek Self-Determination

Meanwhile the Arab position had been given articulation in December 1920 at an important meeting at Haifa, called the Third Arab Congress because Palestinian Arabs had participated in two previous congresses held in Syria. Representatives of Muslim and Christian societies, as well as prominent members of the Husaini and Nashashibi "families" were among the leading participants in this Congress, which elected Musa Kazem Pasha, former Mayor of Jerusalem, as chairman.²⁷ Repeated several times later, this Arab Congress played an important role in Arab organization and provided an instrument for dealing with the mandatory authorities.

The Third Arab Congress passed a resolution demanding "self-determination and the establishment of a national, i. e., Arab, Government in Palestine."²⁸ It protested specifically against the mandatory's recognition of the Zionist Organization as an official body, the setting up of immigration quotas for Jews, the recognition of Hebrew as an official language, and the appointment of many prominent Zionists and Jews to high offices in the Palestine government. This resolution formed the basis of Arab policy in Palestine throughout the mandate period.²⁹ The Arab Executive Committee, organized at the 1920 Congress, became the main coordinating body of Arab political activity for more than a decade. Its members were elected by the Congress and it was headed by Chairman Musa Kazem Pasha. Jamal Husaini was its secretary.³⁰

In 1921, the Supreme Muslim Council was formed as an official Arab body according to regulations drawn up by an Arab assembly and approved by High Commissioner Samuel. It consisted of a president and four members elected for four years. After 1926, the members were nominated by the High Commissioner.³¹ The Council's functions were nominally to regulate the religious affairs of the Muslim community, to supervise the spending of funds belonging to Islamic religious endowments (waqf), and to handle Islamic religious appointments. However, as the Arabs came to be regarded as merely one of the religious communities in Palestine and ceased to be identified with the government, their religious representatives on the Council also became the political spokesmen for their community. This was especially true when Haj Amin Husaini, the Mufti of Jerusalem, became President of the Supreme Muslim Council. Personal talent and qualification combined with special circumstances to make Haj Amin a very influential political figure, and in Jewish eyes he was to be "the symbol of Arab opposition to Zionism."³² On the other hand, Arab extremists denounced the Mufti as a British agent.³³

British Pursue a Middle Course That Leaves Both Arabs and Jews Dissatisfied

The basis for British policy in Palestine during the mandate period was contained and set forth in the white paper of 1922, which was issued as the official view on Britain's role as mandatory of the territory.³⁴ This document, which first enunciated the principle of "the economic absorptive capacity of the country" as a criterion for the admission of Jewish immigrants,

committed Britain to the principle of a national home for the world's Jews in Palestine, but it did not spell out the political implications of such a policy.³⁵ Although going further even than the Balfour Declaration in the direction of meeting Zionist aspirations, the 1922 white paper failed to satisfy Zionist demands completely. With the Zionists calling for unlimited Jewish immigration and the Arabs just as adamantly opposed to even limited immigration of Jews, the British compromise position left both extremes in violent opposition to the mandatory authorities.

The Arab community steadfastly refused to accept the idea of a Jewish national home in Palestine, and their leaders continually pressed the British (1) to end Jewish immigration, (2) to prevent the transfer of land through sale or otherwise from Arabs to Jews, and (3) to establish representative self-government, in order to give the predominantly Arab population of the country control over public policy. There was some validity in the charge that Arab leaders "negotiated with their eyes fixed, not on the political object in view, but on the necessity for preserving an unsullied reputation for patriotism among their fellow-countrymen."³⁶ But this contention does not alter the fact that Zionist desires were antithetical to the interests of the Palestinian Arab community.

This basic conflict was often obscured or lost sight of in the complex of demands and arguments, claims and counterclaims, that went on in Palestine during the mandate years. The Zionists argued that the importation of Jewish skill and capital into Palestine was bringing progress and economic prosperity to an underdeveloped and underpopulated country. They claimed that the transfer of land from Arab landowners to Jewish settlers did not deprive the Arab peasants of any land which they really needed, and that, in any event, the improved methods of cultivation which the Jews brought to the country would enable the Arabs to live better on less land. The Arabs saw the Jewish influx in quite a different light. Refusing to admit even the partial truth of Jewish contentions, the Arabs pointed to the creation of a class of landless Arab peasants, many of whom drifted into the towns in search of employment and lived there in deplorable conditions.³⁷

INSURGENCY

The violence of the 1930's was thus a direct outgrowth of tensions between the Jewish and Arab communities which had been steadily mounting since the establishment of the British mandate over Palestine. There had been similar disturbances, although on a much smaller scale, in 1920-21 and again in 1929. In 1933, as on each of the earlier occasions, the impetus behind the Arab community's resort to armed violence was increased Jewish immigration.

The year 1933, which witnessed the advent of Nazi power in Germany, brought a new surge of Jewish immigration to Palestine. The number of immigrants rose from 9,553 in 1932 to 30,327 in 1933, 42,359 in 1934, and 61,458 in 1935. In addition, there were some 22,000 illegal immigrants in 1932-33.

Arabs Demonstrate Against Increased Jewish Immigration

Arab leaders reacted quickly to these developments by issuing in early 1933 a manifesto to the Arab community charging the Zionists with attempting to take possession of the country by legal and illegal means and accusing the Palestine government of paving the way for a Zionist takeover. The manifesto ominously warned that the government must bear the consequences of its actions. On March 26, 1933, an Arab meeting in Jaffa adopted the principle of economic boycott and noncooperation toward the mandatory.

In October, when the Arab Executive Committee called upon the Arabs to demonstrate against the government, street demonstrations were held despite an official ban. On October 13, the Committee declared a general strike which led to rioting and disturbances and forced the administration to proclaim emergency measures.³⁸ These initial disturbances occurred in the cities of Jaffa, Haifa, Jerusalem, and Nablus and were confined to urban Arabs. The attack was directed against the forces of the government and was, therefore, "for the first time a manifestation of Arab feeling against the Government as well as against the Jews."³⁹

In October 1934, there was another strike and a new outbreak of Arab riots, in which 26 persons were killed and 187 injured by police fire. The area of rioting was wide, extending to Jaffa, Haifa, and Nablus.⁴⁰ In December, an Arab delegation sought an interview with High Commissioner Sir Arthur Wauchope, to whom they submitted the Arab view that the sale of land to Jews and increasing Jewish immigration had reached such a scale "as to be contrary to the promises to preserve Arab rights given in the mandate."⁴¹ Sir Arthur answered that the policy of the government was to increase the productivity of the land and that Jewish immigration was not excessive.⁴²

Arabs Organize Politically and Crystallize Their Demands

Arab discontent continued unabated, and, following the death of the Arab Congress Chairman Musa Kazem Pasha, Arab political groups began to reorganize and by 1935 to crystallize around more militant leaders. Six political parties came into being at this time: the Palestine Arab Party, under the leadership of Jamal Bey Husaini (a kinsman of Haj Amin Husaini, the Mufti of Jerusalem); the National Defense party, under the leadership of Ragheb Bey Nashashibi (former Mayor of Jerusalem); the Reform party, with no president, but with Dr. Husain E. Khalidi, Mayor of Jerusalem, as a leading member of its executive committee; the National Bloc, under the leadership of Abdul Latif Bey Salah; the Congress Executive of Nationalist Youth, led by Yacub Ghusein; and the Istiqlal (Independence) party, under the leadership of Auni Bey Abdul Hadi.⁴³

Communal tensions continued to mount, and in November 1935 there was a flare of great excitement in the Arab community when a smuggled consignment of arms, addressed to an unidentified Jew, was discovered in the port of Jaffa. On November 25 the leaders of Arab parties

presented a joint memorandum to the High Commissioner demanding (1) establishment of democratic government, (2) prohibition of land transfer to the Jews and the enactment of a law guaranteeing a minimum holding to Arab peasants similar to the Five Fedan Law of Egypt, (3) immediate cessation of Jewish immigration and formation of a competent committee to determine the "absorptive capacity of the country" and lay down a principle for immigration, (4) legislation requiring lawful residents to carry identity cards, and (5) investigation of illegal immigration.⁴⁴

The British Response Revives Arab Fears

The High Commissioner responded to these demands by proposing a Legislative Council for Palestine in which both Arabs and Jews would be represented and promising to enact legislation which would prevent Arab landowners from selling all their agricultural holdings to non-Arabs. The government also promised at this time to set up a new statistical bureau to determine appropriate rates of immigration into the country.

The Arabs, although far from satisfied with the government's proposals, were inclined to accept the Legislative Council project as a partial settlement of their demands, and they finally accepted the invitation to send a delegation to London to discuss the Legislative Council idea.⁴⁵ In fact, in early 1936, the Arabs seemed for the first time willing to talk rather than fight, but at this juncture the government suddenly changed its policy and abandoned the project of the Legislative Council, following a debate in Parliament in which a number of pro-Zionist politicians attacked the scheme.⁴⁶ The abandonment of the project "revived all the old Arab suspicions about Zionist backstairs influence and British bad faith." A "new wave of despair" overshadowed the outlook of the Arabs, who saw in these developments "fresh evidence of Jewish influence in London, and a proof that the self-government institution for which they were asking was as far away as ever."⁴⁷ As a result violence appeared imminent.⁴⁸

As Violence Breaks Out, the Arab Higher Committee Is Organized

Jewish-Arab relations were further exacerbated by a new wave of violence which seems to have started accidentally when a Jewish immigrant of Greek origin was killed on the road from Nablus to Tulkarm on April 15, 1936, by a marauding Bedouin.⁴⁹ The funeral was the occasion of serious riots in Jaffa and Tel Aviv. The government resorted to curfew regulations and enacted new decrees forbidding traffic in arms, ammunitions, and explosives.⁵⁰ Sixteen Jews and five Arabs were killed in these disturbances.⁵¹

After these events, things began to move rapidly. The Arabs called a general strike; and an Arab Higher Committee, with supporting local committees, was speedily organized on April 25, 1936. It consisted of the Mufti of Jerusalem, Haj Amin Husaini, as president and Auni Bey Abdul Hadi and Ahmad Hilmi Pasha of the Istiqlal Party as secretary and treasurer respectively, with Ragheb Bey Nashashibi, Jamal Bey Husaini, Abdul Latif Bey Salah, Dr. Husain E. Khalidi, Yacub

Ghusein, Yacub Faraj, and Alfred Rook as members. The last two were Christian Arabs who were members of the Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic communities respectively. ⁵² This body superseded the old Arab Executive Committee and undertook to conduct negotiations in the name of the whole Arab population of Palestine during the period of the insurgency. It seemed to be "in closer touch with the rank and file than any previous Arab body" because it was able to maintain contacts through the local Arab National Committees. ⁵³

Arab Objectives, Strategy, and Operations in 1936

Led by the Mufti of Jerusalem, the acknowledged spiritual and political leader of the Palestinian Arab community, the Arab Higher Committee called for continuation of the general strike and in a letter addressed to the High Commissioner reiterated the community's demands. These included the three basic objectives which would keep Palestine as an Arab country and prevent the establishment of a Jewish national home, namely, the termination of Jewish immigration, prohibition of the transfer of land from Arabs to Jews, and the establishment of a national government responsible to a representative council. ⁵⁴

The strike was generally effective, and it soon developed into a general campaign of civil disobedience on the Indian style, including a refusal by the Arabs to pay taxes. Later, rioting broke out and disorders spread rapidly, assuming the aspect of a small war in the summer of 1936. Arab peasants carried on a campaign of sabotage and sniping attacks against both government troops and police and the settlers in Jewish colonies. Small armed groups carried on guerrilla warfare from the hills. Special targets of attack by the insurgents were police stations; the road, railway, and telegraphic communications; and the oil pipeline running from Iraq to Haifa. Arab insurgents in the countryside practiced extensive economic sabotage against Jewish settlers, uprooting their fruit trees and maiming livestock. ⁵⁵

In October 1936, after mediation by neighboring Arab states, the strike was called off, even though the insurgents' political demands had not been met. One apparent reason for this temporary lull in insurgent activity was to permit the Arab guerrillas, most of whom were peasants, to participate in the harvesting of the orange crop. Orange exports promised to be especially lucrative in that year, since Spain, Palestine's chief competitor, was then embroiled in civil war. Some 800 Arabs, as well as 80 Jews and 28 British, had been killed in the fighting since April. ⁵⁶

With Some External Arab Support, Violence Is Renewed in Mid-1937

To a limited extent, the Arab insurgents enjoyed the advantage of foreign sanctuary and assistance. From the summer of 1936 on, they drew volunteers as well as weapons and supplies from neighboring Arab countries, and Fawzi Kawkji, a Syrian military leader with long experience in previous Arab risings and military organization in other countries, assumed command of

Arab guerrilla forces. He drilled the guerrilla units in trench warfare and prepared for open encounter with British forces.⁵⁷

Violence broke out anew in the summer of 1937 when the British announced a partition scheme for the eventual settlement of the Palestine question and Arab terrorists killed the Acting District Commissioner for Galilee, believed by them to be a principal author of the partition proposal. When the government began suppressing Arab political groups and deporting their leaders, many insurgent chiefs fled to nearby Arab countries. The Mufti of Jerusalem, for example, escaped to Beirut, Lebanon, and his kinsman Jamal al-Husaini fled to Syria.

By 1938, armed groups of Arab rebels were operating in all the major cities, and rebel bands openly dominated the smaller towns. Jerusalem and southern Palestine were for a time almost completely under insurgent control. During 1938 there were 5,700 major acts of terrorism, and the total casualty rate increased to fifteen times the figure for the year before. In 1938, 69 British, 92 Jews, 486 Arab civilians, and over a thousand Arab insurgents were killed.⁵⁸

Intra-Arab Rivalries and Cohesion

There were perhaps no more than 1,000 to 1,500 armed rebels in Palestine at any one time. Split up in small groups and living among the largely sympathetic Arab population, the Arab insurgents were directed by the Mufti and remnants of the Arab Higher Committee who were outside the country. Traditional family rivalries were also reflected among the insurgent forces. The Husainis, being the Palestinian clan most active in the insurgent cause, took this opportunity to pursue their feud of long-standing with the Nashashibis, who as moderates were accused by the Husainis of being British agents.⁵⁹

Many Zionists cherished the oversimplified view that the opposition to Jewish settlement in Palestine came not from the Arab masses but from a small minority of effendis, or urban educated leaders, who cared little for the interests of their people and were motivated by selfish desires and personal ambition. This was a misleading conception; the leaders of the Arab community in Palestine were naturally drawn principally from the upper and middle classes, who were better educated and more politically aware, but this did not alter the fact that these effendis generally reflected the popular feelings of the Arab majority in the country. Zionist leader David Ben Gurion recognized this when he advised his fellow Zionists to remember "the national movement behind the plans [of the Arab opposition], its discipline and leadership."⁶⁰ With many of the characteristics of a jihad, or holy war, the insurgency has been described as a "peasant revolt, drawing its enthusiasm, its heroism, its organization and its persistence from sources within itself."⁶¹

COUNTERINSURGENCY

When public order and security broke down in 1933 the mandate authorities were eventually able to gain a temporary détente through a combination of intensive police and military action,

economic measures, and the mediation of moderate Arab leaders. No permanent political settlement with the Arab insurgents seemed possible at this time because of basic contradictions in Britain's Palestine policy. On the one hand, public opinion in Britain favored the Zionist cause. On the other hand, the growing threat of international conflict with the Axis bloc countries compelled the British to look for allies among the Arab leaders of the Middle East, who were greatly agitated over the Palestine question. Unable, therefore, to reach a political understanding acceptable to the Arabs in 1935-36, the government faced three more years of violence. During these years the British and their Jewish and Arab supporters held the insurgents at bay but were unable to defeat them militarily.

Initial Reaction to the Outbreak of Violence

When the disturbances began to take on the aspect of a general rebellion in the spring of 1936, the government was not prepared to cope with the situation. It had not seemed necessary to maintain a large military force in Palestine, which since 1920 had been under the general military supervision of the British Royal Air Force. There were very few British troops in the mandate and no officers above the rank of colonel at the beginning of the insurrection.⁶²

Finding the forces at his disposal insufficient either to protect isolated and scattered Jewish settlements or to attack the bands in the hills, High Commissioner Sir Arthur Wachope asked for troop reinforcements from Egypt and Malta in April 1936.⁶³ At the same time, curfew regulations were put into force and all traffic in arms, ammunitions, and explosives was prohibited. Troops were sent on patrol duty in the countryside, where they were charged with the maintenance of order and the protection of communications.⁶⁴

Police Measures Against Individuals and Communities

The government took punitive action against particular individuals who were identified as instigators of the disturbances. One of these individuals was Hassan Sidky Dajany, a Jerusalem municipal councilor who was president of the Transport Strike Committee. Dajany, who early in May had circulated an appeal calling for nonpayment of taxes and for strikes by all Arab officials, was arrested and brought to trial with his assistants, and a fine was imposed on each of them. Later, on May 24, 1936, Hassan Sidky Dajany and three other Arab leaders and four Arab journalists were expelled from Jerusalem and confined to forced residence in the villages. Finally a concentration camp was opened at Surfend where Arab leaders suspected of instigation were detained.⁶⁵

Other police measures included closing the offices of the Strike Committee and imposing collective fines on suspected communities and villages when the particular offenders could not be identified.⁶⁶ The Arab working-class quarter in Jaffa, which was an impenetrable labyrinth of resistance activity and a hotbed of opposition to the government, was blown up by the military on June 17, 1936. For this action, which was represented as a measure of town-planning, the government was later severely criticized by the High Court.⁶⁷

Strength and Role of the British Armed Forces

In July 1936, two cavalry regiments arrived. With this augmentation of forces, the troops were authorized to take the offensive against the insurgents, marking a new phase in the counter-insurgency. On July 6, some 4,000 men began to comb the area of the Judean Hills between Jerusalem and Nablus. Other detachments were later sent to search for and seize arms which might be found in Arab villages.⁶⁸

When the situation did not improve, the Colonial Office announced on September 7, 1936, that the British First Division would be sent to Palestine, with Lt. Gen. J. G. Dill in command of all British forces in the mandate territory.⁶⁹ During the summer of 1936 the number of British troops in Palestine rose from less than 10,000 at the outbreak of hostilities to nearly 30,000.⁷⁰

Although ground forces were needed to combat the Arab guerrilla bands, who were most active in the hilly interior of the country, the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force also played important supporting roles in the counterinsurgent effort. The navy was used mainly for transport of troops and supplies, but it also helped to a lesser extent in keeping the port towns quiet and sometimes in suppressing disturbances. For example, on May Day of 1936, when some Arabs from outside Haifa who were bent on enforcing the general strike started a riot in that city and set fire to a Jewish timber yard, sailors from the fleet assisted the police in restoring order.⁷¹

Airplanes were used in the Palestine campaign mainly for reconnaissance and for transport of troops whenever landing facilities were available. On a few occasions, the RAF supplied tactical ground support in combating the insurgents. For example, on June 1, 1936, when a convoy was ambushed near Tulkarm, the escort was reinforced and RAF planes helped in driving away the assailants, whose casualties numbered 10 dead and 20 wounded.⁷² A similar action took place on July 23, on the Tel Aviv road, when a group of Arab fighters attempted to ambush a convoy escorted by airplanes. Insurgent losses in this episode amounted to 12 dead.⁷³

Jews Fight on the Side of the Counterinsurgents

The government admitted the Jewish population into a limited partnership in its effort against the Arab insurgents. Thus 2,800 Jews were enrolled as supernumerary constables, and the arms supplies which had been maintained for some time in sealed armories in Jewish quarters were augmented.⁷⁴ The number of Jews who were sworn by the government to defend Jewish settlements reached 5,000, aside from other guards and patrols.

An important feature of Anglo-Jewish military cooperation was the utilization of Jewish effort to erect and guard a barbed wire fence about 60 miles long on the Lebanese frontier. This barrier proved to be very effective in preventing volunteers and supplies from reaching the insurgents from that direction.⁷⁵ Jewish military cooperation was not limited to purely defensive

measures. Soon Jews were admitted also into partnership in the so-called night squads. These were mixed groups of British and Jewish fighters under the command of British officers who, according to a high Jewish authority, sought to "stealthily seek out the villages where terrorists gather or the hills whence they descend, ambush them, carry the war into their territory, destroy them."⁷⁶ These groups, adopting the guerrilla techniques of the insurgents, operated as what might be described as pseudo- or countergangs.

In addition to *this* regularly authorized Jewish military effort, certain segments of the Jewish population developed independent military organizations, and some of these initiated violent action against the Arabs on their own. The largest of these organizations was the Haganah, the Jewish secret army, which eventually included most of the able-bodied Jews in Palestine. In 1936, there were some 10,000 members of the Haganah. Although strictly speaking the Haganah was illegal, the British "tolerated it because its aims were defensive."⁷⁷

Some Arabs Opt for the British

In addition to authorized and unauthorized help from the Jewish community, government forces, at least in matters of intelligence and maintenance of order, got some help from the numerous Arab officials, especially the police, who continued to render their usual services. On June 30, when 137 senior Arab officials of the Palestine government protested to the High Commissioner against the use of force and advised the cessation of Jewish immigration pending the arrival of a royal commission of inquiry, the Arab members of the police force abstained from joining in that action.⁷⁸

Those who remained loyal to the government incurred the wrath of their countrymen and often were the targets of reprisals by Arab insurgents. Several Arab policemen were assassinated at Tulkarm on May 24, 1936, and near Nazareth even after the end of the general strike in October.⁷⁹ Moreover, there were many casualties among Arab servicemen, both Muslim and Christian, who were members of the Palestine Police and the Trans-Jordan Frontier Force.⁸⁰

Military Operations and the Imposition of Martial Law

During September 1936, several serious military encounters took place between the forces of General Dill and the insurgents near Jenin and Nablus. The Arabs suffered heavy losses, and most of those killed were found to be from Syria and Trans-Jordan.⁸¹ On October 7, 1936, another encounter took place near Bethlehem in which an insurgent leader from Syria, Said Effendi el Asse, was killed and a Palestinian Arab leader, Abdel Kader el Husaini, was wounded and taken prisoner.⁸² These events showed that, in spite of the Syrian Kawkji's efforts to train the insurgents, the government forces enjoyed a definite superiority when it came to open encounter.

During the fall military offensive the government instituted emergency regulations to strengthen its hand in dealing with the insurrection. On September 29, 1936, the Palestine Martial Law Order in Council was published in the official gazette. This order by the British government in London gave the High Commissioner extraordinary powers which he could, at his discretion, delegate to General Dill.

Economic Measures Aid the Jews

On the economic side, the government counted on the loss of income and increasing hardships resulting from the general strike to bring the Palestinian Arabs to terms. This may have been a factor in the temporary restoration of order which obtained in the winter of 1936-37, when the Arabs suspended insurgent operations, possibly in order to profit from the approaching orange export season.⁸³

The most important positive economic measure which the government took was the authorization to load and unload merchandise at Tel Aviv beach, thereby sanctioning the creation of an all-Jewish port.⁸⁴ This undercut the economic effects of the Arab strike and reduced trade for the Arab port cities. It also had equally important strategic and political implications, since it liberated Palestine's Jewish settlements from dependence on Jaffa, which had been the only port for southern Palestine.⁸⁵

British Seek a Political Solution in the Matter of Jewish Immigration

From the beginning the government recognized the political nature of the Arab insurgency and realized that it could not be dealt with by purely military action or by economic measures alone. A radical change in Britain's policy toward the mandate territory was clearly needed to meet Arab demands, but on the other hand, the government did not want such a policy change to appear as a concession made under duress and in response to violence.⁸⁶ Since the termination of Jewish immigration had come to symbolize the minimum condition set by the Arabs for ending the strike, the British took an adamant stand on this question. Although Jewish immigration had been suspended once before—in the 1920's by High Commissioner Sir Herbert Samuel, who was himself Jewish and pro-Zionist⁸⁷—there was a feeling in 1936 that concessions made as isolated and temporary palliatives during previous disturbances had only encouraged more serious disorders later. Indeed, the Zionists did not miss a chance to press this view on the government; when the High Commissioner was inclined to delay action on the immigration schedule submitted to him by the Jewish Agency on April 15, 1936, he was advised by the Agency that continued deferment would be regarded as "a surrender to violence."⁸⁸

Acting on these assumptions, the government proceeded in May to set the immigration quota for 4,500 persons. Although this was considerably fewer than the 11,200 demanded by the Jewish Agency, it nevertheless indicated the determination of the mandatory to reject the Arab demand

that all immigration be stopped. On the same day, the British Colonial Secretary, J. H. Thomas, declared in Parliament that the government intended to appoint a Royal Commission to "investigate the causes of unrest." In order to emphasize the government's basic stand, he made it clear that the investigation would begin only after order was restored and that no change in policy would be contemplated before the Commission's report was received.⁸⁰

This deadlock between the declared stand of the government and that of the insurgents was a matter of procedure as well as principle. On the one hand, the military situation deteriorated appreciably in the summer of 1936, and there were more serious and more frequent acts of violence and repression still to come. On the other hand, the High Commissioner was evidently resolved to be conciliatory despite the consequences.⁸¹ One pro-Zionist author, in attempting to explain this behavior of the government, concluded that the High Commissioner either "misread the character of the Arab leaders, or vastly overrated their strength."⁸² It appears, however, that in reality both the Arabs and the British were hunting for face-saving devices in order to initiate a change of policy which in all probability would not be to the liking of the Zionists.

Arab Governments Mediate and a Settlement Is Reached in October 1936

The policy of "fight but keep talking" disposed the government to obtain the assistance of Arab rulers of British-dominated neighboring territories.⁸³ Thus, the Emir Abdullah of Trans-Jordan invited the members of the Arab Higher Committee to meet with him twice at 'Amman, on June 16 and August 4, 1936; and he tried unsuccessfully to persuade them to end the strike and allow the Royal Commission to begin its study of the Palestine question. Next, the Foreign Minister of Iraq, Nuri as-Said, arrived in Jerusalem on August 20, 1936, to offer his mediation. It was reported that Nuri as-Said met privately with Moshe Shertock and suggested that the Jewish Agency voluntarily undertake a temporary cessation of immigration as a "spectacular gesture" symbolizing the genuine desire of the Jews for understanding with the Arabs. At the same time, there were rumors that Nuri as-Said had made a proposal with regard to the suspension of Jewish immigration which was viewed with favor by the British government. In the end, Nuri's suggestion was not accepted by the Jewish Agency and the new British Colonial Secretary, W. G. A. Ormsby-Gore, wrote on September 3, 1936, in answer to an inquiry by Weizmann, that Nuri had never been authorized to give the Arabs any assurance regarding the suspension of immigration, nor had his terms ever been accepted by the British government.⁸⁴

Despite these early failures, mediation efforts by the governments of the Arab states still seemed the only way to end the impasse and, in October 1936, the rulers of Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Trans-Jordan, and Yemen addressed an appeal to the Palestinian Arabs through the Arab Higher Committee. It called upon them "to resort to quietness in order to avoid bloodshed, relying upon the intentions of our friend the British Government and its declared desire to insure justice." The Higher Committee, in agreement with the local National Committees, appealed to the "noble

Arab nation in Palestine to put an end to the strike and disorders.⁹⁴ The response was immediate and, aside from some minor incidents, work was resumed and the insurrection appeared to be ended.⁹⁵

While the government's military operations in September-October 1936 and the economic pressures which were brought to bear on the Arab community had their effect on the total situation, the intervention of the Arab rulers was perhaps the decisive factor in restoring the peace at this time. It was widely believed that the Arabs had reached a prior understanding with the British government regarding Arab demands throughout the Middle East region.⁹⁶ Regarding Palestine, the British government indicated that "while no concession could be made under duress, Arab grievances would receive due consideration in the event of restoration of order."⁹⁷

British Proposal of Partition Inspires Renewed Rebellion by Arabs—and Jewish Extremists

The October settlement proved to be of short duration. In July 1937, the Royal Commission which had been sent to study the Palestine question during the winter of 1936-37, published its report, proposing a partition scheme, and fighting erupted again. For the next two years, the government was faced with renewed hostilities which at times reached more serious proportions than in the earlier period. The government's response in 1937 was primarily military, although attempts to reach a political settlement continued concurrently with military offensives. By 1938, counterinsurgent forces had lost control of many parts of the mandate territory, particularly in the south, and it was becoming increasingly clear to the British that some sort of political understanding with the Arabs would have to be achieved before peace could be restored to Palestine.⁹⁸

The situation was not improved by the appearance in 1938 of a Jewish terrorist organization, called the Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organization). Affiliated with the extremist wing of the Zionist movement, the Irgun terrorists advocated a policy of reprisals against Palestinian Arabs and independently carried out acts of terrorism to counter Arab activities. While it is difficult to give an accurate estimate of their activities, the Irgun was credited with numerous acts of violence, including two brutal bombings of Arab marketplaces.⁹⁹ Although these acts of terrorism were deprecated by the government and repudiated by the leaders of the Jewish community, Irgun terrorism nevertheless counted in the military balance against the Arab insurgents and was thus part of the total de facto reservoir of force on the counterinsurgent side of the Palestine conflict.¹⁰⁰ With the emergence of terrorist organizations on both sides of the communal struggle, the government found resolution of the insurgency beyond the means at its disposal.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

The Woodhead Commission, sent to Palestine in 1938 to work out the details of partition, was unable to devise any plan which would give the Jews a viable area without leaving a sizable Arab minority and the bulk of Arab-owned citrus areas in the Jewish zone. Consequently, this Commission recommended a scheme of economic federalism, providing autonomous areas of Jews and Arabs, with the mandatory to determine the fiscal policies of both zones. Early in 1939, the British government invited representatives of both the Arab and Jewish communities of Palestine and of the Arab states to attend a Round Table Conference in London. When both parties rejected their proposals, the British proceeded unilaterally to announce a new Palestine policy, embodied in the white paper of May 17, 1939.¹⁰¹

British Solution Pleases No One, but World War II Imposes a Truce

The 1939 white paper declared flatly that Great Britain was not committed to the creation of either a Jewish or Arab state in Palestine, but would work for the establishment at the end of a ten-year period of a joint Arab-Jewish state, in which the special position of the Jewish national home would be recognized, British strategic interests guaranteed, and the holy places protected. During the first five years, a maximum of 75,000 Jewish immigrants would be permitted and illegal immigrants would be either deported or deducted from the official quota; after the first five years, Jewish immigration would become subject to Arab approval. The sale of land to Jews would be regulated by the High Commissioner.¹⁰²

The Zionists naturally attacked this document, which in fact met many of the demands of the Arab insurgents. The Arab leaders, on the other hand, were encouraged by the white paper to hold out for even better terms. With war imminent in the spring of 1939, it was generally known that Great Britain was anxious to win the friendship of the Arab states and keep peace in the Middle East, a region strategically vital to the defense of the British Empire. The outbreak of World War II in September 1939 imposed a truce in the Palestine conflict, without actually resolving it to the satisfaction of either the Jews or the Arabs.

The Arab insurgency in Palestine is significant as an illustration of the difficulties facing a third power in a country torn by religious and communal rivalry among ethnic groups who have the support of coreligionists and sympathizers abroad. In the absence of a political consensus among the Jewish and Arab inhabitants of Palestine, and with virtually no awareness on the part of Jews and Arabs of a common economic interest or identity as Palestinians, the British mandatory regime operated on the theory that in time such a consensus would somehow evolve. In the meantime, the British sought to pacify and develop Palestine in accordance with a set of often conflicting and gradually changing values and objectives, including humanitarian concern for the Jews as oppressed people and Great Britain's national interest in the Middle East as part of the

life line of the British Empire. Public opinion in England throughout the 1930's remained sympathetic to Jewish aims in Palestine. Nonetheless, some British were disturbed about the commitments made to the Arabs during World War I, and a few took a pro-Arab point of view. The British government, moreover, had to maintain amicable relations with the Arab world in the face of growing Axis influence in the Middle East. Thus, the British operated under special constraints, their hands tied by international forces and events beyond the borders of Palestine. Although the outbreak of World War II imposed an artificial truce in the troubled territory, their dilemma was never to be fully resolved, and indeed renewed violence, this time initiated by the Jewish community, was to follow at war's end.*

*See Chapter Fourteen, "Israel (1945-1948)."

NOTES

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- ⁴Royal Institute of International Affairs, Great Britain and Palestine 1915-1941 (Information Department Papers No. 20a; London: Oxford University Press, 1946), p. 50.
- ⁵Ibid., p. 30.
- ⁶Nevill Barbour, Palestine: Star or Crescent? (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1947), p. 107.
- ⁷Royal Institute, Great Britain and Palestine, p. 30; John Marlowe, The Seat of Pilate, an Account of the Palestine Mandate (London: Cresset Press, 1959), p. 120.
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- ¹⁴Barbour, Palestine: Star or Crescent? p. 30; H. B. Sharabi, Government and Politics in the Middle East in the Twentieth Century (Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Co., 1962), p. 167.
- ¹⁵Halpern, The Idea of the Jewish State, Chs. I, II.
- ¹⁶Text in George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs (New York: Cornell University Press, 1960), p. 81.
- ¹⁷Ibid., p. 316.
- ¹⁸Ibid., pp. 77-79.
- ¹⁹Royal Institute, Great Britain and Palestine, p. 1.
- ²⁰Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, p. 79.
- ²¹Ernest Main, Palestine at the Crossroads (London: George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1937), pp. 48-68.
- ²²Ibid., p. 123.
- ²³George E. Kirk, A Short History of the Middle East (New York: Praeger, [1955]), pp. 151-52.
- ²⁴Ibid., pp. 156-57.

- ²⁶Marlowe, The Seat of Pilate, pp. 87-88.
- ²⁷Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs, pp. 316-18.
- ²⁸Esco, Palestine, Vol. I, p. 474.
- ²⁹Ibid., p. 321.
- ³⁰Ibid., pp. 475-76.
- ³¹Marlowe, The Seat of Pilate, pp. 91-96.
- ³²Royal Institute, Great Britain and Palestine, p. 25.
- ³³Barbour, Palestine: Star or Crescent? pp. 149-51.
- ³⁴Kirk, A Short History of the Middle East, p. 154.
- ³⁵Barbour, Palestine: Star or Crescent? pp. 123-26.
- ³⁶Marlowe, The Seat of Pilate, p. 91.
- ³⁷Ibid., p. 96.
- ³⁸Barbour, Palestine: Star or Crescent? p. 163.
- ³⁹Royal Institute, Great Britain and Palestine, p. 85.
- ⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 50, 85.
- ⁴¹J. M. N. Jeffries, Palestine: The Reality, p. 650.
- ⁴²Royal Institute, Great Britain and Palestine, p. 86.
- ⁴³Ibid.
- ⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 27-28.
- ⁴⁵Barbour, Palestine: Star or Crescent? p. 193.
- ⁴⁶Marlowe, The Seat of Pilate, pp. 135-36.
- ⁴⁷Barbour, Palestine: Star or Crescent? p. 194.
- ⁴⁸Royal Institute, Great Britain and Palestine, p. 88.
- ⁴⁹Marlowe, The Seat of Pilate, p. 136.
- ⁵⁰Jeffries, Palestine, p. 655.
- ⁵¹Royal Institute, Great Britain and Palestine, pp. 88-89.
- ⁵²Barbour, Palestine: Star or Crescent? p. 196.
- ⁵³Esco, Palestine, pp. 792-93.
- ⁵⁴Royal Institute, Great Britain and Palestine, p. 28.
- ⁵⁵Barbour, Palestine: Star or Crescent? p. 196.
- ⁵⁶Jeffries, Palestine, p. 656.
- ⁵⁷Royal Institute, Great Britain and Palestine, p. 96; Kirk, A Short History of the Middle East, p. 186.
- ⁵⁸Esco, Palestine, Vol. II, p. 795.
- ⁵⁹Kirk, A Short History of the Middle East, pp. 186-87.
- ⁶⁰Ibid., p. 187.
- ⁶¹Ben Gurion, Rebirth and Destiny of Israel, p. 92.

- ⁶¹Marlowe, The Seat of Pilate, p. 137.
- ⁶²James Parkes, A History of Palestine From 135 A. D. to Modern Times (New York: Oxford University Press, 1949), p. 323.
- ⁶³Ibid., p. 324.
- ⁶⁴Jeffries, Palestine, p. 656.
- ⁶⁵Herbert Sidebotham, Great Britain and Palestine (London: Macmillan and Company, Ltd., 1937), pp. 196-97.
- ⁶⁶Ibid., p. 201; Royal Institute, Great Britain and Palestine, pp. 89-90.
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- ⁶⁸Sidebotham, Great Britain and Palestine, p. 208.
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- ⁷⁰Royal Institute, Great Britain and Palestine, pp. 93-95.
- ⁷¹Sidebotham, Great Britain and Palestine, p. 195.
- ⁷²Ibid., p. 207.
- ⁷³Ibid., p. 209.
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- ⁷⁵Ben Gurion, Rebirth and Destiny of Israel, p. 97.
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⁹⁴Marlowe, The Seat of Pilate, pp. 140-41.

⁹⁵Great Britain, Reports of His Majesty's Government on the Administration of Palestine for 1936, p. 34.

⁹⁶Main, Palestine at the Crossroads, p. 127. One pro-Zionist writer went so far as to credit the "shrewder members" of the Arab Committee with arranging the mediation of the Arab rulers. (Sidebotham, Great Britain and Palestine, p. 210.)

⁹⁷Barbour, Palestine: Star or Crescent? p. 203.

⁹⁸Kirk, A Short History of the Middle East, p. 187.

⁹⁹Marlowe, The Seat of Pilate, p. 189.

¹⁰⁰Ben Gurion, Rebirth and Destiny of Israel, pp. 90-95.

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Chapter Four

**UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS
1917-1921**

by Ronald Thompson



RUSSIA AND THE UKRAINE (1917-1921)

HPO, Jr

Chapter Four

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS (1917-1921)

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The Bolshevik revolutionists-turned-rulers were forced to defend their newly acquired power in Russia against a variety of threats, including foreign intervention and domestic enemies both to their Right and their Left. This paper concerns the Ukraine, where the fledgling Communist party and Red army used a highly successful blend of terrorism, political machination, and military force to defeat peasant guerrillas and Tsarist regulars alike.

BACKGROUND

The terms insurgency and counterinsurgency usually suggest a sharp dichotomy, with one side holding the people and the other side holding the power—an asymmetrical relationship, as the technical jargon has it. In the Russian Revolution this stark contrast became ambiguous. For Vladimir Lenin, the dominant figure of the revolution, proved equally adept at capturing people and at capturing power; and his Bolshevik party, the fountainhead of modern insurgency, enjoyed so notable a success that it quickly became the chief Russian counterinsurgent force as well.

If Mao Tse-tung is the father of modern insurgency, Lenin is surely its grandfather, and his greatest contribution was the Communist party itself (called the Bolshevik party until 1919). As established by him in 1903, this movement, though ostensibly only the dominant wing of the Social Democratic party, was actually a conspiratorial, combat party designed for the seizure of state power through the manipulation of people. With its officer corps of professional revolutionists, its organizational principle of so-called democratic centralism, its systematic ("scientific") development of strategy and tactics, and its Machiavellian subordination of ethics to utility, the party proved equally capable of legal or illegal, peaceful or violent, political or military, national or international development. In Lenin's own words, it was the "lever" with which he was to overturn the whole of Russia.¹

Leninist Tactics, as Applied to Insurgency

To accomplish its goal, the Communist party rapidly developed a fundamental technique; the simultaneous capture of allies and isolation of enemies, sometimes referred to as the "salami" tactic. The problem, as seen by the Communists, was to eliminate all rival leaders of the people or holders of power, and the way to do it was to isolate them one by one, utilizing the rest as allies, whether witting or unwitting, for each successive overthrow. When the enemy in the first round was eliminated, the ranks of the allies were again split and a new enemy was singled out for similar treatment. The leading ally of the Bolsheviks in one round was—quite unknowingly, of course—the chief candidate for enemy in the next round. The whole maneuver may sound too brazenly simple, but only he who has not studied modern history can dismiss it. Taught today in modern texts on counterinsurgency warfare, it was perfected almost 50 years ago in Lenin's revolutionary workshop.²

When the Tsar of Russia was overthrown in March 1917, the leader of the allies was the Kadet party, which Lenin immediately worked to isolate. Behind the Kadets came the Socialist Revolutionaries (SRs); and Lenin strove to split them and to propel the Left SRs against the majority SRs. Kadets, SRs, and Mensheviks (the more moderate wing of the Social Democratic party) were all participants in Alexander Kerensky's provisional government—against which Lenin raised the claims of the First Congress of Soviets. Inside the Congress, the SRs and Mensheviks were at first in control, and in this instance Lenin fought to separate the members from their leaders. Workers in the cities, peasants in the countryside, and non-Russian nationalities throughout the empire were all urged into action in the hope that they would attach themselves to the Bolshevik leadership.

Above all, and with the most devastating effect, Lenin applied his Communist lever to the 10-million-man Russian army. The point is sometimes made that Lenin's road to power, unlike Mao Tse-tung's, was purely political rather than military. But where Mao was to apply his party lever to an economically underdeveloped society by concentrating on rural areas and building up a guerrilla army outside the existing armed forces of the nation, Lenin applied his in a relatively developed society precisely by concentrating on the cities and by infiltrating and eventually subverting the existing armed forces. As early as the 1905 revolution, Lenin had not only attempted an uprising with his own paramilitary force of Red Guards, but he had also infiltrated the Tsarist army. The surest road to revolution, in Lenin's view, was national defeat in war, because it opened all doors, even the army's, to infiltration. In this spirit, he greeted the First World War and the prospective defeat of his own country as events that would clear the ground for revolution.

The fall of the Tsarist government in 1917, during the third year of the war, confirmed his highest expectations. The discipline of the Russian army was destroyed, officers were replaced by soldiers' committees, and all political parties found a fertile field for agitation in the ranks.

The chief agency of this revolution was the Petrograd* soviet which, while still not controlled by the Bolsheviks, commanded the allegiance of the soldiers' committees to such a degree that Kerensky's provisional government could not challenge it. Bolshevik party cells soon spread throughout the Petrograd and Moscow garrisons, the Baltic Fleet, and the armies of the Northern Front, all of which were in strategic proximity to the central cities. In September 1917, the Bolsheviks gained control of the Petrograd and Moscow soviets (the former under the command of Leon Trotsky), thereby obtaining direct authority over the military forces in the two capitals.

The actual seizure of power was the work of Trotsky's military revolutionary committee, established by the Petrograd soviet, and its chief military specialist, Vladimir Antonov-Ovseenko. On November 7, while popular forces such as worker groups and Red Guards were deployed in the foreground at Petrograd, special contingents of sailors from Kronstadt, of known Bolshevik, Left SR, or anarchist sympathies, made the decisive moves by occupying specific strong points. By the end of the day, the provisional government had been overthrown, and the Second Congress of Soviets, already under Communist control, indicated that the operation had transformed the March revolution into a "proper" revolution.³

Leninist Tactics, as Applied to the Consolidation of Power

Once the victory was his, however, Lenin—who had been the chief subverter of power—became the firm consolidator of power. The Communists now had a world to lose as well as one to win, and they used every means at their disposal both to retain the control they had and to extend it further. Russia's war with the Central Powers,[†] which Lenin had previously said should be transformed into a revolutionary war against imperialism, was instead terminated by the peace of Brest-Litovsk in March 1918, thereby permitting German occupation of the Ukraine and provoking Russia's former allies, England and France, into establishing beachheads of their own on Russian soil.

The old Russian army, gutted by the Bolsheviks and now a liability to them, was replaced by a new Red army based on strict discipline. Whole groups of the old officer corps in turn formed the nuclei of the White armies that were to wage a three-year civil war with the Reds.

The non-Russian nationalities, which had been promised independence by the Bolsheviks, found this promise highly conditional. Those nationalities which were beyond the reach of the Red army, such as the Poles and the Baltic peoples, made good their independence, while other more exposed nationalities, as the Ukrainians, Georgians, and Turkestanis, were forcibly prevented from achieving self-determination.

*The city is now known as Leningrad.

†Germany, Austria-Hungary, Turkey, and their satellites.

The parties of the provisional government,* as the immediate victims of the Bolshevik coup d'état, were suppressed or driven underground, though the SRs made strenuous efforts in 1918 to establish a "true" Russian government in the Urals as a rallying point against the Bolshevik government in Moscow.¹ The turmoil of the ensuing Russian Civil War, so much more devastating for Russia than the First World War, produced a state of anarchy in which it was often impossible to tell friend from foe or insurgent from counterinsurgent. In this bellum omnium in omnes, more than one group acted as insurgent when asserting itself externally against some stronger group and as counterinsurgent when protecting itself internally against a weaker one. Such a situation was made to order for Lenin, to whom insurgency and counterinsurgency were not two antithetical styles of fighting but variations of one and the same strategy. His style, both before and after 1917, combined political warfare with military means, to capture people and power.

Scope and Focus of This Study

For purposes of the present analysis, attention will be focused on those relationships during the Civil War period which most clearly reveal Lenin and the Communists performing a counterinsurgent role. This paper will pass over the activities of foreign powers and the White armies (though these were Lenin's principal military opponents) and dwell instead on the mass movements that were stirred into life by the Revolution of 1917, only to be broken by the victorious march of Communist power after 1917. The motivation behind such movements was not defense of the old order against a revolution but defense of the revolution itself against what seemed to them its betrayal. Since the leaders of these movements were usually incapable of working both sides of the insurgent-counterinsurgent road, Lenin was cast in the role of counterinsurgent against them.

The present analysis will, moreover, be limited to the single area of the Ukraine during the years 1917 to 1921, although other areas, especially Turkestan, displayed rich and varied examples of insurgency in this same period. The Ukraine was the scene of a particularly wild mélange of insurgent and guerrilla movements caught up in the Civil War, running the gamut from Petlura the nationalist, through Vinnichenko the socialist, through Grigoriev the peasant opportunist, and to Makhno the anarchist. All these men were at one time or another allies of the Soviets, but, having been given the salami treatment, they sooner or later became insurgents against the Soviets. Taken together, they reflected a popular upheaval of tremendous scope and vitality which tested most severely Lenin's strategic and tactical prowess. But the same mastery and virtuosity that Lenin had already displayed as chief insurgent, he was now to demonstrate in his new role as counterinsurgent-in-chief.

*The SRs had received 54 percent of the country-wide vote for a Constituent Assembly in November 1917.

INSURGENCY

The fall of the Tsarist regime in March 1917 found the Ukraine much less ready for self-rule than the Russian portions of the empire. The peasant majority in the countryside was dominated by the towns, and the towns were dominated by Russians or Russian-oriented Ukrainians.

The Ukrainians Set Up a Rada in Bid for Self-Government

A Ukrainian Central Council or Rada was quickly established to represent the local demand for autonomy; but even in Kiev, the traditional Ukrainian capital, municipal elections in July 1917 went three to one in favor of the various Russian parties over the Rada supporters. In the rural areas, however, the Rada parties—the Ukrainian Social Democrats (USDs) and the Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionaries (USRs)—had much more substantial support; in the elections for the Constituent Assembly late in 1917 they had no difficulty in carrying most of the Ukrainian provinces. But again, time would show that in their alignments the peasants were peasants first and Ukrainians only second. The real nationalist core in the countryside was limited to a thin stratum of intellectuals such as rural teachers, who were mostly USRs. The older Ukrainian leaders in the towns were largely USDs. Among them Vladimir Vinnichenko became chairman of the Rada secretariat and Simon Petlura secretary for military affairs.⁵

In growing rivalry with the Ukrainian Rada organization, there spread out from Russia proper in 1917 a network of soviets (councils) in various combinations of workers', soldiers', and peasants' representatives. As in Russia, most of the soviets in the Ukraine were soon brought under the control of the Bolshevik party, but the Bolsheviks were so overwhelmingly Russian or Jewish in composition that they had little success in obtaining support in the Ukrainian countryside. Thus, in December 1917, when the Bolsheviks tried to repeat their Petrograd success by summoning to Kiev an All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets to endorse an anticipated Bolshevik seizure of power, the Congress got completely out of hand and instead overwhelmingly endorsed the Ukrainian Rada. The disgruntled handful of Bolsheviks thereupon left the Congress, quitting Kiev for the more completely Russianized atmosphere of Kharkov, where a local soviet congress was conveniently in session. This gathering was promptly upgraded to become the "true" All-Ukrainian Congress of Soviets, and on this basis a Soviet government of the Ukraine was proclaimed to contest the claims of the People's Republic established by the Rada at Kiev. Armed conflict was thus precipitated.⁶

The Rada Is Cast Out of Kiev by Soviet Forces

Civil war in the Ukraine opened with the soviet puppet government at Kharkov serving as the channel for intervention by the Russian Communists. The original Soviet force of Kronstadt sailors, Moscow Red Guards, and local Kharkov volunteers—only 800 strong and with a

"loot-the-looters" style of operation—was certainly nondescript, but it proved to be superior to the Rada's somewhat similar levies under Petlura.

In this heyday of propaganda warfare, one agitator was reputed to be worth a hundred soldiers: the intellectual party agitator had the purpose, training, and discipline which the peasant soldier lacked. On this first invasion, Bolshevik agitators talked, or confused, enough of the Rada's best contingents into switching sides to smooth the way for a Red capture of Kiev and expulsion of the Rada in February 1918.

The Rada Brings in Central Powers, Who Set Up the Skoropadsky Puppet Regime

The Rada then tried to turn the tables by bringing in an outside force, the Austro-German troops of the Central Powers, with whom its representatives had reached a separate understanding at Brest-Litovsk. For most of 1918, the Central Powers did indeed become the dominant force in the Ukraine, but they soon dispensed with the Rada in favor of a new puppet regime of their own, headed by a member of the landed gentry, the Hetman Pavel Skoropadsky.

This German-sponsored Skoropadsky regime transformed the Ukraine from a scene of power conflict into a veritable sea of anarchy. The German goal of extracting a million tons of grain from the Ukraine and the aristocratic Skoropadsky's favorable attitude toward restoration of the landed estates brought the peasants almost universally up in arms. The more the peasants resisted, the more the Germans retaliated; and the more their reprisals took effect, the more the peasants resorted to guerrilla war.

The Rada parties were quickly involved, as left wings of both the USRs and the USRs broke with their leaders and sought more direct forms of struggle, as well as cooperation with the Bolsheviks. By May 1918, the Left USRs, the group most closely linked with the guerrillas, had captured their party's newspaper, Borotba (Struggle), from which they took the name of Borotbisty in forming a separate party of their own.⁸

As Skoropadsky Falls, the Rada Is Revived as a Directory

The Skoropadsky regime collapsed following the German surrender in November 1918. The immediate local beneficiary was the old Rada, now revived as a Directory of Five, still headed by Vinnichenko and Petlura. As the hated rule of the Central Powers came to an end, the whole Ukrainian population was visibly astir, with the Directory seemingly riding the whirlwind and directing the storm. In mid-December, Petlura entered Kiev in triumph as the leader of 30,000 troops, with perhaps twice as many guerrillas ostensibly his in the provinces.⁹

The Directory Faces Peasant Rebellion, Foreign Occupation, and Bolshevik Hostility

The Directory's period of rejoicing was brief, however, as the peasant guerrillas, feeling the bit in their teeth, began to act on their own, and as foreign forces, generally much stronger

than Petlura's, converged on the Ukraine from all directions. Among the Directory's supporters, some—as proper Social Democrats and Socialist Revolutionaries—sought to advance the social revolution, necessarily cooperating to some extent with the Bolsheviks, only to be shocked later by evidences of Bolshevik bad faith. Others, such as Petlura, sought to institute a military dictatorship that would forgo social gains in order to fight the Bolsheviks. But such action only alienated the peasants, who were in a radical mood, without stabilizing the military situation.

Among the foreign forces in the Ukraine at the end of World War I, there were several thousand German troops who continued to occupy some Ukrainian cities—ever after 60,000 Allied troops, chiefly French, had occupied the principal towns, especially Odessa, on the Black Sea coast.¹⁰ Farther east, in the area of the Don, Anton Denikin's White Russian army, soon to include the Don Cossacks and total 100,000 men, confronted the roughly comparable forces of the Red army of the Southern Front. And finally, despite a promise of neutrality, Lenin at an appropriate moment reactivated the Russo-Ukrainian front.

The Directory Is Overthrown by the Bolsheviks

In November 1918, a Ukrainian Soviet government was proclaimed for the second time. Antonov-Ovseenko, who had already served as the military commissar for Moscow's first conquest of the Ukraine a year before, was given the same post for a repeat performance on a larger scale. Although the forces that Moscow could spare were still ridiculously small, the completely disorganized rabble of the earlier occasion had been left far behind, and the 8,000 men at the start of the Red campaign grew to 46,000 with the capture of Kiev in February 1919.¹¹ By this blow, the Rada-Directory government in the Ukraine suffered the fate of the Kerensky regime in Russia; Petlura was fortunate to escape from Kiev with his remaining 20,000 troops and seek refuge on the Polish frontier, where he intrigued with the new Polish state of Marshal Józef Piłsudski for a later unsuccessful comeback.

The Soviet Government of the Ukraine Finds That Peasants Remain an Insurgent Threat

With Christian Rakovsky installed as the head of the Soviet government at Kiev, the team of Antonov-Ovseenko and Rakovsky now held very much the same position occupied just two months before by Petlura and Vinnichenko, who had ridden the peasant whirlwind but had been unable to control it. Of the 46,000 men claimed by Antonov-Ovseenko, perhaps one-third were partisans who two months earlier had been claimed by Petlura. The guerrilla gale, which at first had surged so easily to the Directory's side, had surged just as easily, when brighter prospects opened, to the Soviet side. Would the Communist party succeed any better than the USRs and USRs in directing this storm to its own advantage?

Among those already moving toward closer relations with the Soviets were the two most considerable guerrilla leaders of the entire Ukraine—the Ataman Grigoriev and Nestor Makhno.

These men, each in his own way, were among the outstanding insurgent leaders of the 20th century, and their deeds significantly affected history. Makhno in particular had few peers. They stand as prime examples of the Communist tactic of using an ally, literally until the very moment when he is to be ambushed as an enemy.

The Guerrilla Chief Grigoriev Refuses Soviet Orders

Grigoriev, guerrilla chief of the steppe lands on the west bank of the lower Dnepr, was a Cossack with military experience in World War I. He had been commissioned as a partisan leader by Petlura, and then he carved out a career of his own. A brilliant irregular fighter, with the magnetism necessary to hold together a guerrilla band numbering 7,000 by December 1918, he was especially remarkable for his brash and uninhibited self-advancement. Although he claimed to be a Borotbist (Left USR) as an offset to Bolshevik pressure, he also officially attached himself to the Red army of Antonov-Ovseenko in February 1919, when he concluded that it was the winning side.

When Antonov-Ovseenko sent political commissars to bring him under control, however, Grigoriev ignored them and followed his own inclination, moving south to attack the wealthy, refugee-jammed, French-garrisoned cities on the Black Sea coast. With some hard fighting, more braggadocio, and still more sheer luck, he captured Kherson and Nikolaev in March, and then, with weapons and momentum thus acquired, he staged a triumphal entry into Odessa in April. The greatly superior French troops, professional soldiers who had survived four years of war on their own home front, simply refused to face a postwar fight on a foreign front and had to be evacuated in indecent haste.¹²

Still acting against orders and now bursting with colossal self-esteem, as well as several trainloads of booty, Grigoriev and his 15,000 partisans returned to their rural base within the bend of the Dnepr, while Antonov-Ovseenko and his associates alternately raged and applauded. Ordinarily, the next step for the Bolsheviks would have been to discipline their refractory subordinate, but on this occasion their hands were stayed by the menace of Denikin's White offensive opening in the east and by the anxious appeals of a fledgling Hungarian Soviet in the west. Antonov-Ovseenko's ingenious solution was to pack Grigoriev off in the direction of Hungary and thereby leave the Bolsheviks in full control of the Ukraine, but this plan foundered in the pace of Grigoriev's contrary intentions.

Grigoriev Turns Against Bolsheviks and Is Crushed

The growing resistance of Grigoriev's peasant followers had forced him to adopt the now standard Communist practices of requisitioning grain, organizing agrarian communes, and flouting national and religious allegiances. Therefore, instead of leaving for the Western front in May 1919, Grigoriev suddenly unleashed an anti-Bolshevik, anti-Russian, and especially

anti-Semitic rebellion. The timing could hardly have been more disastrous for Bolshevik hopes, for by this time the peasant masses had again grown disillusioned--Lenin's Antonovists seemed no better than the Petliurists.

The Grigoriev uprising became the signal for a general insurgency which marked the near breakdown of Soviet rule in the Ukraine. Only by a desperate concentration of Soviet forces, was the military threat posed by Grigoriev broken in the next two weeks, but in the meantime the Bolshevik's golden opportunity of linking up with the Soviet regime in Hungary had been lost and the ominous threat from White Russian forces under Denikin had materialized.¹³

Nestor Makhno, Revolutionary Anarchist and Peasant Hero

Especially affected by the Denikin invasion that followed was Grigoriev's counterpart, Nestor Makhno, the dashing young guerrilla chief of the east bank of the lower Dnepr. Unlike the cynical military adventurer Grigoriev, Makhno was a dedicated peasant-anarchist who had spent World War I in prison for previous radical activities and whose hatred of any and all governments had been confirmed by the experience. Released in 1917, he had returned to his home base at Gulai Polye, an overgrown village of 30,000 on the open steppes between the Dnepr bend and the Azov Sea, where he quickly led the local peasants in seizing the land from surrounding estates.

The German occupation made Makhno an active insurgent, and his tactical skill and popular appeal won him a following that by February 1919 numbered perhaps 10,000 men, or one-half his claimed strength.¹⁴ This force, spearheaded by a 2,000-man cavalry, was made up chiefly of a mobile infantry transported in light, two-horse carriages, or tatchankas, capable of holding three men each and keeping pace with the cavalry on raids that might average 40 miles a day. They usually fought as scattered bands, avoiding major engagements in favor of hit-and-run tactics. The terror of the local nobility and other holdovers from the old regime, they were, by the same token, heroes and champions in the eyes of a peasantry long accustomed to a spirit of rebelliousness.¹⁵

Makhno Views Bolsheviks as Misguided, But Sees Grigoriev as an Antirevolutionary

The ideological pretensions of Makhno's band were largely supplied by a handful of intellectual anarchists who published Nabat (Tocain) at Kharkov. This group helped Makhno to establish what they considered to be the true expression of the 1917 revolution: multiparty local soviets which were controlled by neither the Communists nor Moscow. The program fitted in with the ideas of Makhno's peasant followers, who were in a sense "natural anarchists," opposing all outside governments as designed to reduce them once again to near serfdom.¹⁶ They nonetheless differentiated between the Reds and the Whites, considering the former a lesser

evil—correct in being revolutionary, but incorrect in trying to capture the revolution for Bolshevism alone.

In February 1919, Makhno, like Grigoriev, accepted "incorporation" into the Red army but at the same time remained virtually autonomous; at one point he too ejected as troublemakers all the political commissars assigned to him. But when Grigoriev staged his anti-Bolshevik uprising in May, Makhno—for all the basic similarity of their roles—refused to join him. The right-wing and anti-Semitic nature of Grigoriev's appeal alienated, if not Makhno's peasant followers, at least his leftward-looking anarchist advisers, some of whom were themselves Jewish.¹⁷

Bolsheviks View Makhno as Another Grigoriev

On May 23, 1919—the day Grigoriev's rebellion was pronounced at an end, though Grigoriev himself was still at large—Makhno too was caught up in a crisis. With their territorial base on the Azov coast, the Makhnovists formed the western end of the curving front between Denikin and the Red army in the area of the Don. Because the Red army and Makhno were suspicious of each other, the Soviets supplied the Makhnovists with no weapons (all Makhno ever had he captured himself), but just with ammunition, and this only on a day-to-day basis.

The Grigoriev uprising both exacerbated the tension and interrupted the flow of ammunition, and charges of bad faith were freely leveled on both sides. Denikin profited from this dispute to bear down with particular force on the bullet-starved and emotionally strained Makhnovists. On May 23, a massive White offensive achieved a breakthrough precisely in Makhno's sector and began turning the Red front, thereby opening up the whole Ukraine. Trotsky, now Commissar of War and already incensed at having been betrayed by one guerrilla leader, took steps to liquidate this new one: publicly, Makhno was ordered dismissed; secretly, the instructions were that he be shot.¹⁸

Makhno Kills Grigoriev and Pursues White Russian Forces

But in the confused conditions of the Denikin invasion, Makhno managed to escape across the Dnepr with most of his troops, where in July he at last met up with the fugitive Grigoriev. A showdown between these two took place at a mass meeting of their combined forces where, when Grigoriev hinted that the time had come for a deal with Denikin, Makhno denounced him as an enemy and read him out of the ranks of honorable revolutionists. Grigoriev in alarm reached for his gun, but Makhno, apparently prepared in advance, bent him to the draw and shot him dead in the sight of thousands.¹⁹

Adding most of Grigoriev's men to his own to make a new force of perhaps 15,000, Makhno succeeded for two months more in eluding Denikin's forces, which were meanwhile occupying all the major Ukrainian cities and preparing at Kursk for the 300-mile dash to Moscow. On

September 26, 1919, Makhno was finally surrounded by superior White forces near Uman, 120 miles south of Kiev. Fighting for his life, he executed a counterencirclement of his own and completely destroyed the White forces that had been pursuing him, gaining most of their weapons for himself.

Then began Makhno's famous two-week dash across the Ukraine: he raised reinforcements as he went, until, having recrossed the Dnepr and reached the shore of the Azov Sea, he cut some of Denikin's principal supply lines running northward to the Moscow front. Denikin struggled another 100 miles in the direction of Moscow, reaching Orel on October 14; but within a week his bold advance had turned into a collapse from the combined effect of the Red army on his front and Makhno's peasant partisans at his rear.

Makhno Controls the Ukraine But Fails To Consolidate a Power Base

It would be the end of the year before the Red army could drive Denikin out of the Ukraine and for the third time establish a Ukrainian Soviet government. Until this happened, Makhno—with his forces now grown to 25,000 men—had ten weeks in which he, even more than Grigoriev before him, was the uncrowned king of the Ukrainian peasant insurgency.²⁰

In terms of the political game as Lenin and Denikin played it, Makhno and his peasant anarchists made little use of their ten weeks of rule at the end of 1919 except to enjoy them. Their favorite sport, in the good old anarchist style, was to burn down the local jails and release the prisoners, hailed as victims of class injustice. They did not understand cities—Makhno once referred to them as so many sores infesting the body of society—and they sought to level, if not the cities' buildings, at least their social organization, to a pattern more appropriate for a simple village. They fought against their present enemy Denikin, but they made no defensive moves against their ally Moscow—so recently their foe and so soon to become one once again. Indeed they had already demonstrated that, despite their fear and dislike of the Communists, for ideological reasons they still preferred them as allies, not only to Denikin and the foreign "imperialists," but also to Petlura and Grigoriev.

Makhno possessed positive and even attractive qualities—his admirers have referred to him as the Robin Hood of the Russian Revolution. But under the jungle conditions of that revolution, his quixotic limitations and inability to maneuver could only mean that he would passively wait for the Communist ax to fall. And fall it did, beginning in December 1919, when the Red army, pressing southward against Denikin, again encountered the peasant guerrillas.²¹

COUNTERINSURGENCY

To examine Lenin's method of overcoming the various forms of Ukrainian insurgency, one must view his efforts within the larger framework of the Russian Civil War.

Bolsheviks Fight Ukrainian Insurgents While Simultaneously Facing Other Forces

In the three years of the Civil War, Lenin faced three successive major military problems in addition to those posed by the Ukrainian insurgents of the Rada-Directory, Grigoriev, and Makhno: in 1918, the Austro-German forces in the Ukraine and pro-Allied Czech mutineers in the Urals; in 1919, the White armies of Admiral Aleksandr Kolchak in Siberia and of General Denikin in the Ukraine; and in 1920, Marshal Jozef Pilsudski's Polish army and Baron Peter Wrangel's White army, both on the fringes of the Ukraine.

There was a steady rise in Soviet strength during these years: in 1918, the Bolshevik army had been greatly overshadowed by both the Germans and the Western allies; in 1919, it was just barely equal to the power of the White armies; and in 1920, it was great enough most of the time to ensure for itself the initiative. At the same time there was an ebb-and-flow pattern within this rise in Soviet strength. In the severe winter months from November to March, the Soviets usually held the initiative. In the temperate season between March and November, the anti-Soviet forces moved to advance their several causes. Thus in the Ukraine the Red army made three successive wintertime invasions. Twice it was driven back—by the Germans in 1918 and by Denikin in 1919. The third time, in 1920, counterattacks by Pilsudski and Wrangel failed, and the Reds were left in control.

During these six distinct phases of marching and countermarching across their land, the Ukrainians staged heroic efforts for national self-rule and agrarian reform. These efforts began moderately with the Rada's political struggle along national lines in their chief city, Kiev. Midway, they reached their peak during the Soviets' second invasion under Antonov-Ovseenko (November 1918-May 1919), when the Ukrainian insurgency seemed to break all bounds as its leadership passed in rapid succession from Petlura to Grigoriev to Makhno. They ended in an anarchist extreme with Makhno's guerrilla warfare at the grass-roots level in the outermost steppes. This was the unruly people that Lenin in his new role as counterinsurgent undertook to quell. And this was the problem in counterinsurgency now to be analyzed, starting with the first Soviet invasion in the winter of 1917-1918.

Bolsheviks Use Both Military and Political Means To Consolidate Power

Taking Russia by surprise with their seizure of power in November 1917, the Communists used the next four months to envelop the country, using the salami tactic to consolidate power. In the Ukraine, as has already been noted, they passed from the Rada as ally to the local Soviet Congress, and from a congress in Kiev to one in Kharkov. What these congresses could not accomplish, the fledgling Red army undertook to do; and where the Red army still lacked force, political agitators were available to produce results. Everywhere the forces of revolution were

flowing, and the Communist party moved in the midst of this flow, promoting it and capitalizing on it in order to capture the population for its own purposes. Using people to win power was still basically an insurgent tactic, even though it increasingly included a counterinsurgent element in that all rival revolutionary bodies were eliminated.²¹

Moscow Gains Control of Internally Split Ukrainian Communist Party

The Communists' expansionist drive was reversed by the sudden seizure of the bulk of Russian territory by German and then Allied forces after March 1918. The tide of revolution shifted from flow to ebb, and Communist tactics were correspondingly modified from offensive to defensive. Obligated to withdraw and retreat, the Communist party, especially in the Ukraine, engaged in a furious debate over the general issue of insurgent- versus counterinsurgent-type operations. One group, represented by the Kiev Communists, was impressed by the extent of anti-German and anti-landlord feelings and wished, as before, to replace the Rada and capture control of the Ukrainian nationalist and peasant revolution. Few of them were Ukrainians and fewer still peasants, but as professional insurgents they sensed the possibilities in the local movement; and in April 1918, in order to take maximum advantage of it, they proclaimed their separate existence (i.e., separate from Moscow) as the Communist Party of the Ukraine.

Another group, the Kharkov Communists, however, prided themselves on being more proletarian, more Russian, and more centralist than the Kievans and argued in Marxist terms that the Ukraine, having no native proletariat, was incapable of true socialist revolution. Thus in August, when the Kievans attempted to promote an insurrection against the Germans and failed miserably, the Kharkovites were quick to seek and obtain Moscow's favor. The Kiev autonomists were subordinated to the Kharkov centralists, and the Communist Party of the Ukraine was divested of its independence and made into a mere section of the Russian Communist Party. Centralism was triumphant, and to ensure it Joseph Stalin was made Moscow's special representative on the Ukrainian Central Committee.²²

With Return of Directory at End of War, Moscow Renews Its Fight To Control the Ukraine

The moment of centralism's triumph in November 1918 coincided with the end of the military conflict among the Great Powers; and the collapse of much of Central Europe provided the great opportunity for the Communists' own war of world-wide political revolution. But the need for bringing the Ukraine within Moscow's orbit was never forgotten. Thus Antonov-Ovseenko conducted military operations in the Ukraine between November 1918 and May 1919, driving the Directory from Kiev in February 1919.

The victory of the counterinsurgent and Moscow-centered wing of the Ukrainian Communists, therefore, did not mean the end of the insurgent wing or the insurgent policies. Indeed, the

ambiguity of Communist policy lay precisely here, since, although Moscow desired complete subordination of the lower party units to itself (the Kharkov line), it still wanted the lower units to utilize all opportunities for capturing the local population (the Kiev line). The very conquest of the Ukraine by Antonov-Ovseenko's Red army was another insurgent, or population-snatching, offensive which was later turned into a counterinsurgent and power-consolidating defensive. Just when Petlura's Directory appeared most victorious, Moscow successfully employed the salami tactic by again proclaiming a Ukrainian Soviet government and reaffirming the old "land to the peasants" slogans, thereby slicing through the Directory's agrarian base of support.

Moscow First Uses, Then Seeks To Destroy, the Peasant Guerrillas of Both Grigoriev and Makhno

This population- or ally-snatching aspect of the Bolsheviks' second invasion of the Ukraine had a new quality that had been missing in their first invasion. Whereas in the earlier instance the targets of Communist propaganda were urban dwellers and demobilized soldiers, on this occasion they were, above all, the bands of peasant guerrillas whose defection to the Bolsheviks brought about Petlura's downfall. When the Bolsheviks took over the Ukraine, the guerrilla bands were their major allies: Grigoriev drove out the French, and Makhno held the line against the Whites.

But the insurgent allies were amateurs, the Soviets professionals; and the Soviets enveloped their partners in a veritable bear's hug of control lines: Red army command, political commissars, Communist party, soviet government, supply services, and Cheka police—even agents specifically assigned to murder the guerrilla leaders if they should defect.

Finally in May 1919, first Grigoriev and then Makhno, sensing that their days as independent allies were numbered, took steps to break free. This was the decisive transition point in Lenin's long-term strategy for the Ukraine; emphasis on insurgent tactics against the "bourgeois" Petlura forces now gave way to emphasis on counterinsurgent tactics against Moscow's present allies. "Bandit suppression" became the order of the day, but before Lenin could accomplish this he himself first had to escape suppression by Denikin. Thus Lenin was able to deal with Grigoriev's breakaway attempt militarily but could not liquidate him politically before the Ukraine was inundated by the anti-Communists forces of Denikin; in Makhno's case, time was too short even for military action.²⁴

Party Centralists Gain Control in the Ukraine

From spring until the end of 1919, Moscow was once again largely on the defensive, first against Kolchak's White army in Siberia and then against Denikin's in southern Russia. As had been the case the year before, Communist retreats led to the organizational punishment of the party autonomists at the hands of the party centralists. Antonov-Ovseenko was removed from

his command, the Ukrainian Front was discontinued as a separate theater of the Red army, the commissariats of the Ukrainian Soviet government became mere branch offices of the Moscow commissariats, and the Ukrainian Communist Central Committee was for the time being simply abolished.

But though the centralists again won the round organizationally, the autonomists were still able to gain concessions. Requisitioning of grain was to continue, but peasants were not to be further alienated by being forced into communal farms. Exclusive reliance on Russian and Jewish leadership in the Ukraine was criticized in the Soviet press, and scathing remarks were made comparing the Communist regime in the Ukraine to a typical colonial administration using only a token number of natives in its governing bodies. Whereas Rakovsky, the Red premier of the Soviet Ukraine, had on the eve of his appointment publicly expressed extreme skepticism concerning the very existence of a Ukrainian nation, official directives now stated that in the future Soviet institutions should cater to national feelings and use the native tongue.²⁵

Moscow Accepts Borotbisty Into Ukrainian Government and Gains a United Front

The key issue in this dispute was the relationship between the Communist party and the Left USSR party of the Borotbisty. Lenin, remembering his own very profitable maneuver of briefly allying with the Russian Left SRs, had repeatedly urged a similar policy for the Ukraine. As a party with considerable grass-roots support but little likelihood of achieving power, the Borotbisty supplemented the Bolsheviks very effectively without being able to challenge them on the field of battle as Grigoriev and Makhno had done. By May 1919, at Lenin's insistence and in order to offset Grigoriev, a handful of Borotbisty had cautiously been admitted to leading positions in the Ukrainian government.

The Borotbisty themselves were ready to extend this cooperation further, and their numbers had recently been augmented by the accession of Vinnichenko, who had broken with Petlura over the latter's military dictatorship in western Ukraine. As Petlura moved towards alliance with Marshal Pilsudski and the new state of Poland, Vinnichenko and the Borotbisty moved towards alliance with the Bolsheviks.

Finally, in December 1919, Lenin imposed a compromise solution by reconstituting the Ukrainian Central Committee on a centralist basis and at the same time conceding to the autonomists the setting up of a new Ukrainian Soviet government-in-exile composed of three Communists, one Borotbist, and one USD independent.²⁶

The formation of this Communist-Borotbist united front coincided with the moment when the Red army, pressing southward against Denikin, first encountered Makhno's guerrillas, then in possession of much of the Ukraine. The anarchistic idyll of these peasant insurgents in their power vacuum outside the main Red-White arena was soon due for a rude shock at the hands of the Bolsheviks when they made their third invasion.

Allied With Borotbist Forces, Communists Open Attack on Makhno

Disregarding their debt to Makhno for his yeoman service against Denikin, the Communists now openly moved to destroy him. They proclaimed him an outlaw to be shot on sight; they laid waste his villages and systematically exterminated his followers. They bracketed him with Grigoriev in order to brand him an anti-Semite, and they labeled him a kulak* in order to separate him from his followers.

Above all, the Communists unleashed their most lethal weapon in the form of "Committees of the Poor," an agrarian version of the salami tactic. Flaunting differences of rich and poor even amongst the egalitarians, the committees split Makhno's peasant forces and so gained a fifth-column ally inside the camp of anarchy. The 25,000 troops Makhno had led in December 1919 had been reduced by March 1920 to one-tenth that number, they had been deprived of their territorial base around Gulai Polye, and they had been broken into little bands of fugitive guerrillas.²⁷

Bolsheviks Absorb the Borotbisty and Thereby Gain a Support Base

The Communists' campaign against Makhno on the one hand and their dalliance with the Borotbisty on the other was hardly accidental. Indeed Ukrainian communism underwent a major change in March 1920, when the 4,000 Borotbisty at last completely abandoned their separate existence and merged outright with the Ukrainian section of the Communist party.

The significance of the merger was considerable, since the Borotbisty, with their strength among the Ukrainian rural intelligentsia, could claim to represent the best tradition both of the Rada's nationalism and of the guerrillas' agrarianism. They literally made it possible for the Communist regime to begin to "speak the native language"; and the war-weary Ukrainians, for their part, could begin to identify themselves with at least the Borotbist additions to the Soviet government and party Central Committee.

Vinnichenko was offered the posts of Deputy Premier, Commissar of Foreign Affairs, and member of the Ukrainian Central Committee. Although he did not accept this offer, the Communists benefited enormously from the very fact that it was made and that Vinnichenko was in Kiev denouncing Petlura at the moment when Petlura was about to aid in the Polish invasion of the Ukraine. The reality of Communist control was, of course, not altered, and the Bolshevik lion had no difficulty in absorbing the Borotbist lamb, but for all that the Communist regime in the Ukraine emerged newly legitimized and strengthened against its adversaries in a way it had not been before.²⁸

*Implying by this term a rich farmer or peasant, often one who had made money by exploiting the poor.

The Bolsheviks Use Makhno Once Again Against Their Common Enemies, Then Destroy His Weakened Forces

Despite this concentration of counterinsurgent strength in Lenin's hands, the coup de grâce against Makhno was postponed for another eight months by other, more pressing concerns. Denikin was not driven into the Black Sea until March 1920, and then the remainder of his forces immediately reappeared in the Crimea under the command of Wrangel. Also, from April to September, the war with Pilsudski's Poland took precedence over everything else. But in October 1920, when the leaders in Moscow turned their efforts from Pilsudski to Wrangel, they thought of a plan for using Makhno—or, rather, using him up—somewhat suggestive of their earlier Hungarian scheme for Grigoriev. This plan was to resurrect the Red-anarchist alliance and send Makhno to clear a pathway into the Crimea, so that both anarchists and Whites would be mutually destroyed.

Despite the suicidal nature of the operation, Makhno responded with alacrity, for the Whites were his preferred enemy. He was unhappy in his war with the Reds; he was at a dead end as far as his guerrilla activities were concerned; and he welcomed a good fight in a "good" cause, i.e., the old-fashioned and familiar class struggle. Makhno was shrewd enough not to trust the Communists completely, however, and he strove to bind them in advance to such specific guarantees as he could get.

In November 1920, when the White defense of the Perekop isthmus to the Crimea proved too strong to breach, Makhno sent his cavalry, 1,500 strong, some 20 miles farther to the east, where they stormed across the ice, thereby opening the way to the peninsula and to the quick expulsion of the Whites. Twelve days after the completion of this mission, his little band was ambushed by Bolshevik troops and treacherously destroyed, only 250 escaping to rejoin Makhno on the mainland. With a faithful handful of cohorts and others who rose to his call, Makhno again took the guerrilla road, relentlessly pursued by the very forces he had twice so signally served, until, ten months later, in August 1921, desperately wounded and with almost all his comrades dead behind him, he escaped across the Rumanian frontier, a broken man.²⁹ The salami one-two was sharper and more brutal for these military allies than for relatively harmless political allies like the Borotbisty.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

The years from 1917 to 1920 saw, in addition to the Communists, at least ten major politico-military forces contending for power in the Ukraine in one of the most confused and chaotic contests in modern times. There were the Russian forces of Tsarism, of Kerensky's provisional government, and of the Denikin-Wrangel White army. There were the foreign interventions by the Germans, the French, and the Poles. And there were the native forces of the Rada-Petlura

camp, of the Borotbisty Vinnichenko camp, of the Grigoriev guerrilla camp, and of the Makhno anarchist camp. Of these groups, three (the Taurists, the Germans, and the French) were defeated chiefly by forces other than the Communists; two (the White army and the Poles) were eliminated by the Communists themselves, chiefly through military means; two (the provisional government and the Borotbisty) were disposed of by the Communists, chiefly through political maneuvers; and three (the Rada, Grigoriev, and Makhno) were broken by the Communists through a combination of military and political warfare. By the end of 1920, the Communists enjoyed a complete monopoly of power, the ten rivals were eliminated or in ruins, and the Ukrainian population itself was thoroughly exhausted by the struggle.

After Suppressing Makhno in the Ukraine, the Bolsheviks Face Continuing Insurgent Threats Elsewhere

And then, to cap the climax, came the Communists' most strenuous campaign combined with the Ukraine's most devastating disaster. It began in the winter of 1920-21 with a new outburst of insurgency in areas outside the Ukraine. At this time, after stirring fitfully throughout the entire period of the Ukrainian struggle, a Basmachi movement suddenly engulfed a large portion of Turkestan when the ancient khanate of Bukhara was overthrown in September 1920.³⁰ Also, the peasants of Tambov Province in Russia proper turned to insurrection when Wrangel's defeat in November relieved them of the fear that by opposing the Reds they might be aiding the Whites. Next, in the pace-setting city of Petrograd the workers began to strike and demonstrate once again, the previously suppressed SR and Menshevik parties re-emerged into active struggle, the Workers' Opposition and other factions threatened the unity of the Communist party itself, and in March 1921 the revolutionary sailors at Kronstadt engaged in open mutiny.

To meet this crisis, Lenin and his associates at the Tenth Party Congress in March 1921 embarked on an all-out counterinsurgent campaign. They crushed the Kronstadt rebels with ruthless severity; they undermined the resistance movements in Petrograd, Tambov, and Turkestan; and they suppressed the existence of all dissident factions inside the Communist party and all revolutionary parties outside its ranks. With their New Economic Policy, begun in mid-1921, they undercut peasant and urban opposition by granting basic capitalist concessions for incentive farming and freedom of trade.³¹

Famine Aids Communist Consolidation of Power in the Ukraine

Above all, the Communists were able to increase their control of the population following the opportune incidence, if not the diabolical manipulation, of the great famine of 1921-22. Deliberate unleashing of a famine against a recalcitrant population, such as was apparently resorted to by Stalin in the early 1930's or by Mao Tse-tung in the early 1960's, was presumably not yet possible in the early 1920's, but the spontaneous response to the famine was still decisive.

Somehow the impact of famine, both in the Ukraine and in the Turkish portions of the Soviet empire, was most devastating precisely in those areas and among those social strata which had been most active in resisting the Communist regime. In the three steppe provinces of the Ukraine on either side of the lower Dnepr, where Grigoriev and Makhno had had their bases, the crop in 1921 was only a fraction of the normal yield. In the first half of 1922, deaths from famine, totaling 800,000 in the entire Ukraine, hit with particular force against these main strongholds of insurgency. From this final devastation, the Ukraine emerged as a conquered province, deprived of the capacity for active resistance.³¹

A Summation

So complete was the Communist victory in the Ukraine that it stands as something of a model for the totalitarian method of takeover and control. This method may be described as the successful combination of two approaches that are commonly thought to be mutually exclusive—the insurgent and the counterinsurgent. As the Russian Red army, the Communists acted as a governmental counterinsurgent force suppressing a revolting province and a rebellious peasantry and preventing a new occupation by foreign powers. But as the Ukrainian Soviet regime, the Communists accomplished insurgent aims more successfully than Petlura, Vinnichenko, Grigoriev, or Makhno, by preventing restoration of the landlords' regime.

The Communists fought from above, using the armed power of the state, and they fought from below, using the ideological mobilization of the population; and they did both simultaneously and with equal virtuosity. For them, military and political warfare were not two compartmentalized processes but merely aspects of one and the same process of total warfare. The salami tactic was equally applicable for setting two foreign powers to fighting against each other, capturing the popular following of a rival political leader, or using up the strength of an unreliable guerrilla ally.

To be sure, the Ukrainian section of the Russian Communist Party was frequently rent by the opposing tendencies of the autonomists and the centralists, and this dualism was to continue despite the official ban on party factions imposed in 1921. Indeed this dualism is characteristic of the Communist movement as a whole, since it reflects the coexistence within one body of two tendencies, the one insurgent in nature and the other counterinsurgent. The insurgent tendency seeks to approach the local population in order to capture it; the counterinsurgent tendency gravitates toward Moscow in order to keep both party and population under central control. The resulting tension is an almost unbeatable combination when properly in balance, but it is a balance that is always breaking down—producing schisms when the autonomists break free from the centralists, or requiring purges when the centralists crack down on the autonomists.

To combat so ambidextrous a foe would seem to call for equal versatility on the part of the defender. It is easy to see that Makhno's one-track insurgency was incapable of victory against

Lenin's two-track warfare. But the much larger battalions of Denikin and Wrangel, which acted with equal singleness of purpose, were also unable to prevail. Perhaps the lesson is that, as with a good boxer, the West's counterinsurgent "right" needs the support of a genuine insurgent "left," since the sparring partner has the peculiarity of fighting with two fists instead of one.

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- ²David Galula, Counterinsurgency Warfare (New York: Praeger, 1964), p. 46.
- ³Stefan T. Possony, A Century of Conflict (Chicago: Regnery, 1953), pp. 27-59.
- ⁴William H. Chamberlin, The Russian Revolution, 1917-1921 (2 vols.; New York: Macmillan Co., 1935), passim.
- ⁵John S. Reshetar, The Ukrainian Revolution, 1917-1920 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1952), pp. 47-62.
- ⁶Richard Pipes, The Formation of the Soviet Union (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1954), pp. 114-23.
- ⁷Reshetar, Ukrainian Revolution, pp. 89-118.
- ⁸Iwan Majstrenko, Borot'bism: A Chapter in the History of Ukrainian Communism (New York: Research Program on the U.S.S.R., 1954), pp. 164-70.
- ⁹Arthur E. Adams, Bolsheviks in the Ukraine: The Second Campaign, 1918-1919 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 78.
- ¹⁰Ibid., p. 96.
- ¹¹Ibid., p. 138.
- ¹²Ibid., pp. 149-214.
- ¹³Ibid., pp. 258-358.
- ¹⁴Voline [V. M. Eichenbaum], The Unknown Revolution (Kronstadt 1921, Ukraine 1918-21), tr. H. Cantine (New York: Libertarian Book Club, 1955), p. 108.
- ¹⁵Ibid., pp. 110, 140.
- ¹⁶George Woodcock, Anarchism (New York: Meridian Books, 1962), pp. 415-24.
- ¹⁷Chamberlin, Russian Revolution, II, pp. 221-41.
- ¹⁸Voline, Unknown Revolution, pp. 116-37; Adams, Bolsheviks, pp. 278-312.
- ¹⁹Adams, Bolsheviks, pp. 402-404.
- ²⁰Voline, Unknown Revolution, pp. 138-56.
- ²¹Ibid., pp. 157-79.
- ²²Leonard Schapiro, The Origin of the Communist Autocracy: First Phase, 1917-1922 (London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd., 1955), pp. 69-146.
- ²³Pipes, Formation of Soviet Union, pp. 121-36.
- ²⁴Adams, Bolsheviks, pp. 278-312; Voline, Unknown Revolution, pp. 116-37.
- ²⁵Pipes, Formation of Soviet Union, pp. 141-45.
- ²⁶Majstrenko, Borot'bism, pp. 172-96.

- ²⁷Max Nomad, Apostles of Revolution (London: Martin Secker and Warburg, Ltd., 1939), pp. 323-32.
- ²⁸Robert S. Sullivant, Soviet Politics and the Ukraine, 1917-1957 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), pp. 51-64, 96-105.
- ²⁹Volino, Unknown Revolution, pp. 136-216; Chamberlin, Russian Revolution, II, p. 239.
- ³⁰Michael Rywkin, Russia in Central Asia (New York: Collier Books, 1963), pp. 33-62.
- ³¹Schapiro, Origin of Communist Autocracy, pp. 296-361.
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Part Two
INTERNAL CONFLICT DURING
WORLD WAR II

FRANCE (1940-1944)

GREECE (1942-1944)

ITALY (1943-1945)

NORWAY (1940-1945)

POLAND (1939-1944)

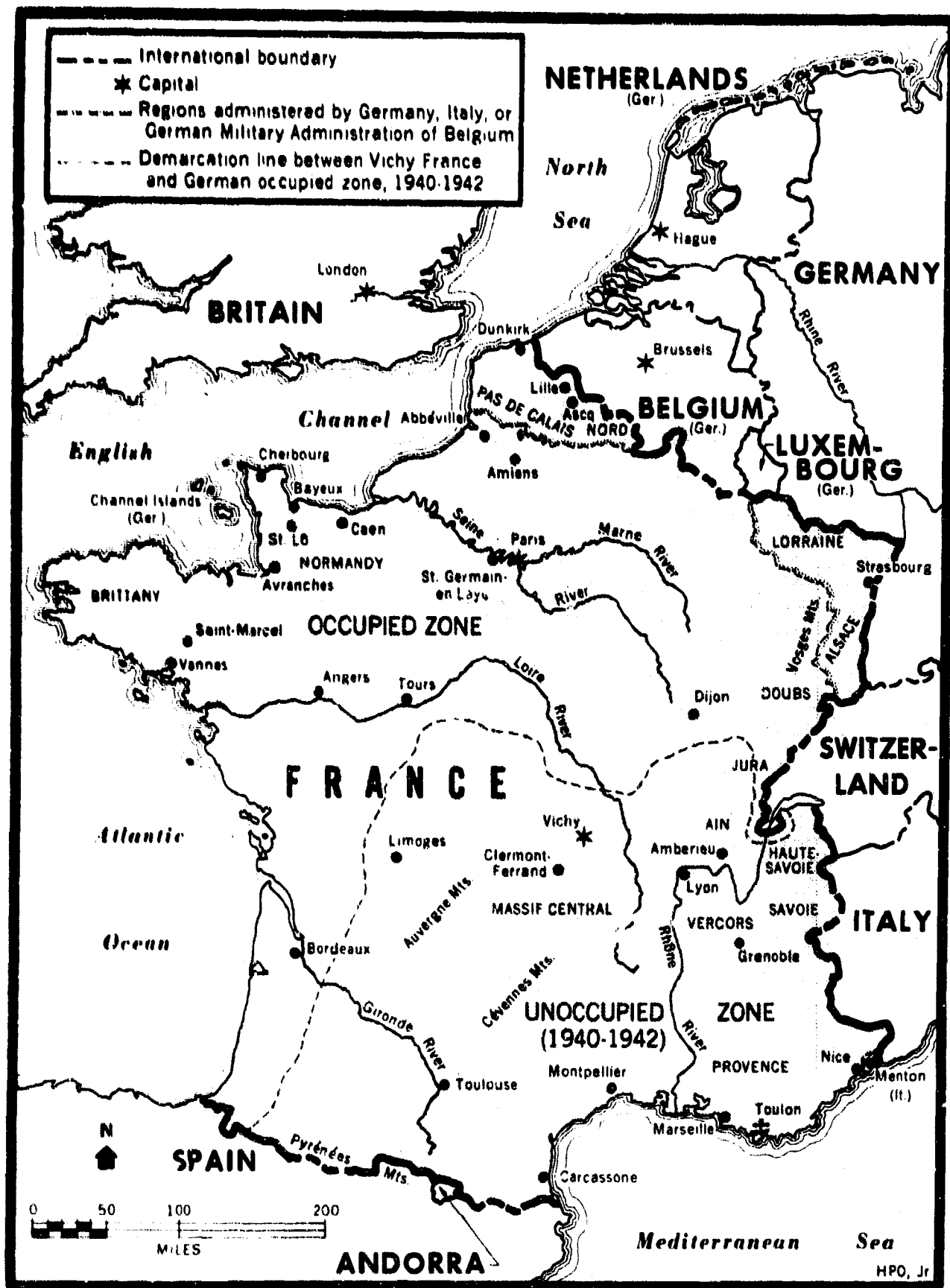
U.S.S.R. (1941-1944)

YUGOSLAVIA (1941-1944)

Chapter Five

**FRANCE
1940-1944**

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FRANCE (1940-1944)

by Charles B. MacDonald

Conquered, divided, and partly occupied in 1940, the French, with Allied aid, created a resistance force that German and Vichy French counterinsurgents held at bay, but did not succeed in destroying, until the landing of Allied troops in June 1944 and the subsequent liberation of the country.

BACKGROUND

In June 1940, the great nation of France, bastion of democracy and individual liberty, with an army reputedly the world's strongest, lay prostrate, beaten by German arms in a whirlwind campaign that had also vanquished Belgium, the Netherlands, and Luxembourg, as well as the elite ground troops of Britain. After a campaign of only a month, the Germans entered Paris, the city in which Frenchmen had eaten rats before succumbing to the Prussian conquerors of 1870-71 and in which French taxi drivers had rushed Gen. Joseph Gallieni's troops to the Marne to thwart the Teutonic invaders of 1914.

The Nazi armies had begun their march on May 10, 1940, with a steel-tipped main effort through the sparsely defended Ardennes region of Luxembourg and Belgium. On the 14th, the Dutch surrendered. In 11 days the Germans covered 240 miles to reach the English Channel at Abbéville and cut the Allied armies off from the heart of France. Anticipating disaster, the British on the 27th began to evacuate their expeditionary force from Dunkirk. On the 28th, the Belgians capitulated. On June 10, Fascist Italy moved against the common frontier in the Maritime Alps to attack the hard-pressed French from the rear. Declaring Paris an open city, the French government retreated first to Tours, then to Bordeaux, while the Germans on the 14th paraded past the Arc de Triomphe. On the 17th, the aging World War I hero, Henri Philippe Pétain, Marshal of France, heading a new government, asked for an armistice. In the early minutes of June 22nd, the issue was settled, signatures affixed.¹

The deed had been accomplished in only 42 days, but the recriminations that followed lasted far longer. The word at first was that political extremists were responsible, those of the far right and the far left who had so split France that the nation was reduced to impotence; this,

plus a soft, effete, demoralized society. These were indubitably part of the explanation, but with the perspective of time it would become apparent that France's capitulation was more properly the result of a tradition-ridden military regime being defeated in the field by an adversary who had learned well the lessons of the stalemate of 1914-18 and developed a new mode of warfare.²

The Armistice Partitions Mainland France

Although termed an armistice, it was more correctly surrender. The proud French fleet and the Empire were the only points d'appui left. The fleet was neutralized in Toulon. Though the colonies remained basically intact, their exports to the mother country were to be rigged to feed the conqueror. To assuage French pride, there was a token 94,000-man "Armistice Army," but more than 1,835,000 French soldiers were in German prison camps. Of metropolitan France itself, the northern half was occupied by German troops; the rest was ruled by a sterile mixture of French opportunists, collaborationists, and dreamers, who settled in Vichy and gave that watering place an association with infamy.

The demarcation line between the northern occupied zone and Vichy France in the south meandered across the waist of the country, except for a western coastal strip appended to the occupied zone. Though the geographical split was approximately equal, three-fifths of the 46 million French lived in the northern occupied zone, 5 million of them in Paris. The occupied zone also contained almost all the coal, iron, and heavy industry, and the bulk of the mechanical, textile, electrical, and chemical manufacturing. Here were the great breadlands of the north and of the Paris basin and also the nation's main sources of dairy products and meat. Here too were the centers of commerce and finance, the main routes of communication, the navigable waterways, and the ports of the Channel and the Atlantic.

In contrast to the north, the area controlled by the Vichy government was less developed, but it contained the ports of Marseille and Toulon and a few other important cities, like Nice, Lyon, and Limoges, plus the agricultural lands of Provence and some of the better vineyards. The south also had the sun of the Mediterranean coast, the medicinal waters of the inland spas, and the spectacular scenery of the mountains—in the east and southeast, the Jura and the Alps; in the center, the sprawling Massif Central bordered by the heights of the Auvergne and the Cévennes; and in the southwest, the Pyrénées. These sparsely populated mountain regions—some so wild that the wolf still prowls—would prove critical in shaping the nature of the insurgency that was to come.³

These were the two main zones, but the Nazis dismembered France further. In the northeast, they reaffirmed the old German claim to Alsace and most of Lorraine and annexed these two regions to the Third Reich. In the north, they incorporated two départements, Pas de Calais and Nord, in the occupied territory of Belgium, and installed a military governor

(Militärbefehlshaber) from Brussels. In the extreme southeast, they gave Italy a small tip of land embracing little more than the town of Menton, all that the Italian army had conquered in the fighting. Later, in 1941, the Germans would create a forbidden military zone* from which most of the population was expelled and where movement of those who remained was rigidly controlled; about 12 miles deep, it ran the length of the western coast and in the fall of 1942 would be extended along the Mediterranean coast.⁴

De Gaulle Summons French To Continue Fight From Exile

There was yet another France, a France-in-exile. This France was scarcely evident at first, except for what seemed at the time a futile appeal from a tall, inscrutable général de division, Charles André Joseph Marie de Gaulle. On the evening of June 18, even before the armistice was signed, de Gaulle called upon all Frenchmen who aspired to continue the fight to get in touch with him in England. He closed with a rousing call to Frenchmen everywhere to keep alive the spark of resistance. Posters later appeared with even more stirring words from de Gaulle: "La France a perdu une bataille! mais la France n'a pas perdu la guerre."⁵

Though few Frenchmen heard de Gaulle's first appeal, broadcast over the BBC, it was repeated numerous times. What became the Free French movement dated its birth from the broadcast, and de Gaulle immediately began working to establish a French National Committee in England. But it would be a long time before the general would be able to speak from strength.

Confused Sentiments in France Aid Conqueror

The trouble lay in the complex emotional conflicts that beset almost all Frenchmen in the wake of the debacle. The armistice was a bitter but ineluctable fact, and the legal authority of the Vichy government could hardly be challenged. Headed as it was by a military hero of France, the government had a strong emotional appeal as well. People asked whether a benevolent dictatorship, which Pétain promptly moved to create, might not be preferable to the dissident, impotent parliamentarianism of the old Third Republic. Besides, what alternative was there? Had strong assistance been available from some outside power, the initial determination to help France that swept her colonies might have been exploited; but no belligerent could furnish that aid except Britain, already so beleaguered that it dared not risk bringing Vichy into the war. This concern, plus a natural hesitation lest they back the wrong horse, made the British cautious in the degree of support they afforded de Gaulle.⁶

A violent Anglophobia fed the confusion. In France, rumor had it that British commanders had begun their evacuation at Dunkirk without consulting the French, and that Britain had

*The Germans had quickly closed off the north central départements, refusing re-entry to refugees, regrouping agricultural lands, and bringing in German colonists. In late 1941 they abruptly reopened the territory.

declined to make available the remnants of her fighter aircraft for a last ditch effort to save France. When Britain extended her continental blockade to the English Channel and Atlantic ports, some said it was to starve France. On July 3, 1940, British naval units tried to annihilate that portion of the French fleet that had found shelter in North African waters at Mers-el-Kebir, gaining by this act no French plaudits. Besides, the British were said to be succoring traitors when they received de Gaulle and his followers; by refusing to accept the armistice, had not de Gaulle rejected the authority of the French state and, by fleeing the country, abandoned France in her agony??

Both Vichy and German propagandists made much of this anti-British sentiment, while the Germans boasted that Britain soon would be brought to heel. Since the French army had been no match for the Germans, there were few who, while wishing otherwise, did not expect that Britain too would fall. With defeat a reality, most Frenchmen stoically accepted Vichy's attempts to reach an understanding with the Germans. The fighting had not continued long enough for ingrained bitterness to develop, and the German troops were at first impressively correct in their behavior.

The Role of the French Vichy Government in the Unoccupied Zone

But what, specifically, did Vichy want? Vichy was a riddle. There were many in the government who adopted an attitude of mea culpa, a kind of regeneration through suffering, as Pétain himself put it in a broadcast on June 25. Strength would come through rejection of secular things and a return to the ideals of God, country, and family. This was an approach tailor-made for those of the far right, the people who in prewar years as the Action Française had pressed their Anglophobia, their anti-Semitism, and their anti-democratic doctrines on the Third Republic. These people were also anti-German, but somehow they believed they might be allowed to sit out the rest of the war on an island of neutrality, abandoned by their conquerors to pursue undisturbed their examen de conscience. Then there were others, personified by Pétain's heir apparent, Pierre Laval, who had become Foreign Minister—out-and-out collaborationists who embraced the German call to join their side promptly in order to gain a favored position in the New Order of Europe. And finally there were those who worked with Vichy because, whatever its sins, Vichy was France, or all that was left of it; and those who participated in the hope that by maintaining at least the myth of self-government, they might exert some pressure on the conqueror to improve the lot of France.⁸

Out of touch with much of the French populace and the creature of a conqueror who inconveniently refused to abdicate that role, Vichy France never became a meaningful political entity. It was a government of bureaucrats for bureaucrats, one continuing drama of intrigues and struggles among self-seeking conspirators surrounding an enigmatic old man, all of it taking place on a stage sharply constricted by a world war and the dictates of the Germans.

To the Germans, Vichy was nothing more than a tool. They found it convenient to have a supine French government in existence, both to bear some of the administrative burden and to forestall the formation of a government-in-exile that might swing the colonies and the French fleet to Britain. All the Germans were willing to grant Vichy were the minimal concessions necessary to ensure these objectives.

German Policies and Economic Levies

To Adolf Hitler, France, including Vichy, existed for one purpose only—to serve the Reich. While propagandists trumpeted the call for cooperation, Hitler and his ministers imposed demands and repressions that meant only subjugation. There was little delay in putting these into effect. Almost immediately all military stocks were seized. Occupation costs were assessed at 400 million francs a day, more than doubling the prewar French budget. The figure was subsequently raised to 500 million, then 700 million. Machinery and vehicles were confiscated for shipment to Germany; supplies for the German forces were requisitioned in the countryside and charged to the French authorities. The exchange rate was pegged at 20 francs to 1 reichsmark, a rate which encouraged occupation troops to buy goods on a large scale to send back to Germany. Systematic levies were imposed on raw materials and products: as much as 80 percent on French production of petroleum and motor fuel, 74 percent on iron ore, 75 percent on copper. These levies affected occupied and unoccupied zones alike. Civilian movement between the two zones was sharply curtailed, and all mail was at first forbidden, although postal cards were later permitted. Shipments of foodstuffs and other commodities from the colonies were confiscated. In July 1940 came the German annexation of Alsace-Lorraine; by the end of the year 120,000 Alsatians and 60,000 Lorrainers were to be deported to the unoccupied zone.⁹

German Administration of the Occupied Zone

To impose their will on the occupied zone, the Germans had both operational and occupation forces. The operational troops, who retained responsibility only in the coastal regions, were under the Commander in Chief in the West (Oberbefehlshaber WEST), a post held off and on between 1940 and 1944 by Field Marshal Gerd von Rundstedt. The head of the occupation forces was the Military Governor, France (Militärbefehlshaber in Frankreich), General Otto von Stülpnagel. Because of illness, Stülpnagel was replaced in February 1942 by his cousin, Karl Heinrich von Stülpnagel.* The military governor was directly responsible to the Oberkommando

*After reacting with apparent approval to the attempt on Hitler's life on July 20, 1944, Heinrich von Stülpnagel attempted suicide but failed and was later executed. His successor was Gen. Karl Kitzinger.

der Wehrmacht (OKW), the Armed Forces High Command in Berlin, except in the event of invasion or similar emergency, when he would come under the Commander in Chief in the West.¹⁰

The military governor was charged with supply of all German forces, including tactical units, and control of the civilian administration, the economy, communications, and industry. He seldom exercised this control directly, but instead, from headquarters in the Hotel Majestic in Paris, supervised and passed orders through French officials. The staff included a chief of staff for military affairs and another for administrative and economic matters. For administration, the occupied zone was divided, in keeping with French practice, into regions, départements, and arrondissements. The central headquarters in Paris and each of the regional and district headquarters, and sometimes those of the arrondissements, had a consignment of German police. There was a proliferation of police, but the main ones were the Abwehr, intelligence service of the German army, and the Sicherheitsdienst (SD), security police of the Nazi party. Though there were in France only a few Geheime Staatspolizei, secret state police, the French knew all German police by the dreaded nickname of this force, the Gestapo.

INSURGENCY

For all the despair that accompanied the armistice, it was not long before the strong tradition of independence and individualism, which had permeated the French people at least since the Revolution of 1789, reasserted itself. At first it took subtle forms: referring to the conquerors as "ces messieurs," passing on bitter little jokes, chalking derisive comments on walls by night, never understanding either the German language or German attempts to speak French, or, perhaps, if one were a waiter, simply putting one's thumb in a German officer's soup.¹¹ One frail lady of 78 daily stationed herself in the Paris subway to trip German soldiers with her cane.¹² There were some, even from the first, who risked much, making false papers or concealing and passing on British flyers and escaped French prisoners of war. Others cheated the Germans in various ways: factory workers let sloppy or inadequate work pass through their hands, trainmen delayed or even managed to lose shipments destined for the Germans, dock workers concealed rotten vegetables among good ones so the rot would spread.¹³

For many months resistance remained for the most part an uncoordinated, individual thing. In the occupied zone, the omnipresent Germans inhibited even the thought of organizing resistance, and in the unoccupied zone, the cult of Pétain and the myth of a French state had much the same effect. In any event, the institutions and machinery that might have served concerted resistance had been swept away in the debacle. The Communist party, outlawed and driven underground by the Third Republic before the war, retained its underground apparatus; but the Communists for the first year of the occupation were party to the uneasy truce of the German-Soviet nonaggression pact and did not move.¹⁴

Early Attempts To Organize Rebellion in Vichy France

Nevertheless, as early as July 1940 there were attempts to form resistance organizations. In the unoccupied zone an army officer, Capt. Henri Frenay, began that month to organize a resistance group among his fellow officers. In 1941 he merged his organization with another that had been born among members of the prewar Christian Democratic party. Together they were known as Combat, and by the end of 1942 there were about 500 members, mostly in the southeast and around Lyon. Frenay formed small réseaux, or networks, some for propaganda, some for intelligence, and some for sabotage and direct action against the Germans.¹⁵

The resistance organizations in the unoccupied zone, which did not labor under the stern repression of the north, tended to develop on a regional rather than local basis and never experienced the fragmentation that accompanied early organization in the north. Three major groups emerged fairly early. One was Frenay's Combat. Another was Franc-Tireur,* founded under another name in late 1940 in Lyon, capital of the resistance in the south. Including numbers of students, this group formed small action squads called corps francs, trained to stage demonstrations, to carry out sabotage, and later to engage in terrorism. The third organization was Libération, founded by an ex-naval officer and journalist, Emmanuel d'Astier de la Vigerie, whose aim was to bring together in one group all wings of the prewar labor unions, including the Communist.¹⁶ In addition to these three main groups, several minor organizations maintained their independence in the south (e.g., France d'Abord, Le Coq Enchaîné, Libérer et Fédérer), but they usually worked in association with the larger groups.¹⁷

De Gaulle Makes Contact With Vichy Resistance

Emmanuel d'Astier's Libération was the first resistance group to endorse General de Gaulle as the leader of Free France. This came early in January 1942 after a delegation of leaders visited de Gaulle in London.

Meanwhile, on January 1, de Gaulle sent into France by parachute a former prefect of Chartres, Jean Moulin, to coordinate the resistance movement. Moulin's was no easy task, for each organization jealously guarded its aims and methods, and for them to merge under the aegis of Moulin was basically an endorsement of de Gaulle. But Moulin held the key to persuasion: money and arms. Libération having already taken the step, Franc-Tireur followed. After a trip to London in September 1942, Frenay brought Combat into the fold. The following month the three groups agreed to form a committee of coordination for the southern zone. A few weeks later, when Gen. Charles Delestraint (alias Vidal) arrived from London, they merged their action units under Delestraint as l'Armée Secrète (Secret Army).¹⁸

* Not to be confused with Francs-Tireurs et Partisans, action arm of the Communist resistance movement.

Northern Insurgency Is Inhibited by German Repression

Ruthlessly suppressed and confronted with Germans at every turn, the resistance groups in the northern occupied zone developed on a more local basis and were slower to merge. The first, in July 1940, was formed by a group of intellectuals associated with the Musée de l'Homme, an anthropological museum in Paris. In December, this group began to publish a clandestine newspaper, Résistance, that eventually gave its name to the overall insurgent movement. But in February 1941 the Germans trapped and executed seven of its leaders, and again in July 1941 and finally in November 1942 snuffed out the new leadership.¹⁹

So strict was the police regime that as late as 1943 some small units in Paris were unaware of the existence of similar groups in the next arrondissement. On the other hand, the very presence of the Germans, plus the absence of the Pétain-Vichy phenomenon, oriented the early resistance in the north less toward political aims and more toward direct military action.

Not long after the organization founded by the ill-fated intellectuals in the Musée de l'Homme, students in Paris created a cell of resistance called Défense de la France. Theirs was one of the first resistance journals. The movement remained independent throughout the insurgency. It never gained real strength or importance because its leaders refused to coordinate with de Gaulle until nearly the end of 1943; they therefore lacked funds and supplies.²⁰

Near the end of 1940 and early in 1941 resistance units began springing up all over the occupied northern zone, but one after another they succumbed to German repression or, because of the repression, failed to expand: L'Armée des Volontaires, Bataillons de Mort, Le Coq Enchaîné, Pantagruel, Valmy, and others. Some merged with stronger groups, more often than not at the urging of both the British and de Gaulle in London, for it was impossible for those outside France to deal with such a proliferation. By the end of 1942 the resistance in the north had gradually coalesced into four main groups: Ceux de la Résistance, Ceux de la Libération, Libération-Nord, and L'Organisation Civile et Militaire.

Each of these had its own bloodstained history—Ceux (Those) de la Résistance was at one point so harried by arrests and executions that its surviving leader ironically referred to himself as "Celui (He) de la Résistance." Each had at first its own particular complexion and regions of greatest strength—Libération-Nord, for example, drew on the old labor unions and was strongest in the north around Lille and in the northeast; while L'Organisation Civile et Militaire, less militant than the others, was made up mostly of former members of government and technical, professional, and career army people and was strongest around Paris. Though each also had its own idea of what was to become of France after the liberation, all were unified in the common objective of getting the Germans out of France. As recruiting progressed, the early identifying features gradually blurred and disappeared under the impact of diverse new membership.²¹

Communist Role in the Insurgency

The German invasion of the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, suddenly catapulted into the resistance a powerful, experienced element: the French Communist Party. Calling themselves the Front National, the Communists tried their usual tactic of uniting in one organization all facets of antifascism, but always under Communist leadership and domination.

Frankly political as well as paramilitary, the Front National sought not only liberation but also national insurrection to bring to power a Communist government. It was the only resistance organization to operate in both occupied and unoccupied zones, though it was much stronger in the north, particularly in Paris. Its action arm, *Francs-Tireurs et Partisans*, provided a ready cadre of capable resistance fighters.²²

De Gaulle Moves To Consolidate Control Over the Resistance

While the organs of insurgency materialized and coalesced in metropolitan France, the man who had set himself up as the rallying point for all Frenchmen continuing the fight, Charles de Gaulle, was engaged in a three-sided battle to retain and solidify his self-appointed position. On the one side, de Gaulle had to win over the French colonies and the French armed forces outside France, particularly the more than 300,000 troops in North Africa, who professed loyalty to Vichy. He had to establish his authority over the resistance groups inside France. And he had to win acceptance by the major Allies—Britain and, after December 1941, the United States—for their material assistance was essential to carrying on the fight against the Germans. Through it all, de Gaulle insisted on complete autonomy for the French and on his own absolute authority in French matters, a policy that complicated the struggle but was essential, de Gaulle believed, if France was to emerge with its sovereignty intact.²³

The British could hardly be blamed for moving slowly with de Gaulle. Relatively low in military rank, de Gaulle had served only a fortnight in a political role and that as Under Secretary of War in the French government whose fall led to the armistice. Though the British had agreed to allow de Gaulle to set up a "center of resistance" in England, they had not given permission for a French national committee or a government of French exiles when de Gaulle followed his broadcast of June 18, 1940, with another in which he claimed to have set up a provisional French national committee recognized by the British government. The British failed to protest publicly, but when de Gaulle's early calls to his brothers in arms produced little response, they made it clear that they could not recognize a national committee that did not, in fact, exist. They nevertheless publicly agreed to recognize de Gaulle as "the leader of all Free Frenchmen, wherever they may be, who rally to him in support of the Allied cause."²⁴

The French were slow to rally. Most of the combatants who had fled to Britain elected to return to France after the armistice: by mid-summer of 1940 de Gaulle had only about 6,000 men. The British attack on the French fleet at Mers-el-Kebir did nothing to spur recruitment.

Yet when no other leader arose to challenge de Gaulle, the British gave increasing support to what came to be known as La France Libre, or the Free French movement. Together they set out to swing the French overseas territories to their side, but, despite military expeditions to Dakar and Syria, they had little success except among the minor possessions. The presence of Free French troops alongside the British nevertheless cemented relations. On September 24, 1941, de Gaulle, with British approval, set up the French National Committee in London. Nevertheless, by the start of 1942, the Free French fighting forces still numbered only about 15,000 men.

The prestige of the Free French took an upward turn in the summer of 1942 when a French force in the North African desert cut its way out of an encirclement at Bir Hacheim. This had a notable effect on opinion in metropolitan France and brought a number of adherents to de Gaulle's cause. Shortly thereafter, to avoid confusion with Vichy, which many knew as "Free France," and with various movements that had sprung up in the Americas, de Gaulle changed the name of his movement to La France Combattante, or the Fighting French.

Funds, Supplies, and Equipment for de Gaulle

Meanwhile, in addition to Great Britain, other foreign governments began to recognize de Gaulle's authority, beginning with the Soviet Union in the fall of 1941. These included most of the European governments-in-exile and many of the world's smaller nations. But the United States, which had continued relations with Vichy in order to maintain a listening post inside France, still declined formal recognition, even after entering the war in December and abandoning Vichy. The reasons were complex, but not the least appeared to be a personal antipathy on the part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt toward the autocratic, seemingly intransigent French leader. Nonetheless, shortly before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor had brought the United States into the war, Roosevelt had extended the provisions of the Lend-Lease Act to de Gaulle's movement, thus augmenting his available supplies and equipment.

Initially, de Gaulle's National Committee was almost totally dependent on the British treasury for funds. The first accord during the summer of 1940 had specified that funds be dispensed as approved by the various ministries of the British government, but at de Gaulle's insistence this was broadened early in 1941 to provide for a separate annual French budget. Otherwise, French funds came from the overseas territories and from wealthy refugees and sympathizers.

For all the gains de Gaulle had achieved by the end of 1941, he still lacked support from the two main centers of French strength: North Africa and metropolitan France. The key to the latter was, of course, the emerging resistance groups. The task of winning them over would have been difficult enough simply because of their diversity, but it was complicated by the fact that beginning soon after Dunkirk, the British had been trying to mobilize the resistance to conform with their own ideas.

British Organisation in France Suffers Disaster

Early in the summer of 1940, the British had established in London within the Special Operations Executive (SOE) a French section under Col. Maurice Buckmaster. His task was to recruit and train agents, both French and British, to re-enter France, establish radio communications with London, help organize the resistance, direct sabotage, and distribute weapons, ammunition, and equipment dropped by parachute. The first agent entered France by parachute the night of May 12, 1941. Other agents were parachuted in, some were later sent by boat, and still others were transported by Lysander aircraft, a light, slow, unarmed plane that could land and take off from improvised fields.²⁵

Colonel Buckmaster's agents and radio operators contributed signally to organizing the resistance, particularly in getting the intelligence collected by the French back to England. There was a hazardous operation. Since the Germans possessed excellent sound-detection equipment, attrition among radio operators was particularly high. But the most disastrous blow came as a result of British attempts to create one overall organization rather than a number of independent groups. In November 1941 a denunciation served to wipe out almost the entire network, leaving only three agents and no radio operators.

De Gaulle's Organization Steps Into Breach

Just as the British organization in France was being wiped out, de Gaulle's London headquarters took on a more integrated form, with the creation of a capable intelligence and operations section, the Bureau Central de Renseignements et d'Action (BCRA) under Col. André de Wavrin. By this time, also, British confidence in the Free French was increasing, while de Gaulle had shed some of the British financial shackles.

The French now began, through the BCRA, to assume much of the responsibility for providing money, organizers, and radio operators for the resistance, while the British retained the final word on arms and equipment, since they furnished both the materiel and the means of transport. The way was thus clear for General de Gaulle to establish control over the diverse French resistance groups, a task begun with Moulin's mission and partially accomplished before the end of 1942, with the merger of the action groups of the organizations in the unoccupied zone into l'Armée Secrète.²⁶

De Gaulle Sustains a Test of Strength in North Africa

The crucial struggle for the leadership of the French resistance was destined to take place not inside France, but in North Africa. In the first step of that struggle, de Gaulle's aspirations received a sharp blow. In November 1942, on the eve of Allied invasion of North Africa, the Americans, seeking an anti-Vichyite around whom the French in North Africa might rally, turned their back on de Gaulle. They were well advised in principle, for North Africa was

strongly pro-Vichy and de Gaulle commanded little following; but neither did the man the Americans chose, Gen. Henri Giraud, who had few qualifications as leader of the French forces, although his romantic escape from a German prison camp had excited public notice.

A series of misunderstandings with Giraud—who somehow believed that what was projected was an invasion of France and that he was to be commander in chief—resulted in a delay in reaching an agreement, so that Giraud arrived in North Africa only on November 9, a day after the landings. His name failed to exercise any particular influence, and the Vichy French continued to fight. The key to a cease-fire appeared to lie with Adm. Jean François Darlan, Commander in Chief of the Vichy French forces, who happened to be visiting in Algiers when the invasion came. After a series of ambiguous cables exchanged with Vichy, Darlan agreed to a general cease-fire on November 10; but Gen. Auguste Paul Nogués, commander in Casablanca, doubted the implications contained in the cables and urged, if not continued resistance, then at least neutrality. The issue finally was settled in the field when Gen. Alphonse Pierre Juin, French army commander in North Africa, ordered his troops on November 12 to turn their guns on the Germans, who had, in the meantime, executed counterlandings in Tunisia.

As the Allied campaign proceeded, Admiral Darlan fell victim to an assassin's bullet. The Allies then tried to effect a rapprochement between General Giraud and General de Gaulle by means of a French Committee of National Liberation (CFLN) with joint presidency. Though de Gaulle had the largest representation on the committee, Giraud retained control of the 300,000 French troops. In the end, General Giraud's lack of political acumen proved his undoing. Having allowed a former Vichy Minister of the Interior, Pierre Pucheu, noted for his repression of Communists in the unoccupied zone, to come to North Africa to enlist in the French forces, Giraud had to contend with violent Communist-inspired demonstrations. These eventually resulted in Pucheu's trial and death sentence in March 1944. Following a test of strength with de Gaulle on a minor matter in April, Giraud retired. From this point—April 1944—de Gaulle had no rivals as acknowledged leader of French resistance outside France. Because events in the interior had also moved in de Gaulle's favor, he had no rivals anywhere.

Jean Moulin Achieves Centralisation of All French Resistance Under de Gaulle

Having achieved the first steps of coordination in the south late in 1942, Jean Moulin attained true unity among the three southern groups with the formation early in 1943 of a central headquarters at Lyon, Mouvements Unis de Résistance (MUR).^{*} L'Armée Secrète now received its orders from de Gaulle's London headquarters through MUR; in addition, MUR directed a new force, l'Organisation de Résistance de l'Armée. This was composed of former officers

^{*}It subsequently took the grander title, Mouvement de Libération Nationale, but there was no broadening of authority.

and soldiers of the Armistice Army who rallied to the resistance after the Germans, in response to the Allied landings in North Africa, had occupied the southern zone and dissolved the Armistice Army.

German occupation of the southern zone further aided the establishment of a centralized resistance by removing any sharp distinction between the resistance in the north and that in the south. Coincident with political organization in the south in March 1943, Moulin—assisted by a special delegation from French headquarters in London—achieved military unity in the north through a committee of direction for the action units of the occupied zone. This brought these units into l'Armée Secrète. To the committee of direction, each of the four major non-Communist resistance groups in the north sent a delegate. Declining to join, Francs-Tireurs et Partisans, action arm of the Communist Front National, sent an observer.

Political centralization followed quickly. On May 27, 1943, Moulin conducted the first meeting in Paris of the Conseil National de la Résistance (CNR), which not only united north and south but also brought in the Communists and representatives of labor and of the prewar political parties. Its directorate had six members: Moulin himself as de Gaulle's national representative and a delegate each from the Front National, Mouvements Unis de Résistance (the southern federation), the Confédération Générale du Travail (representing all former labor unions), a so-called Alliance Démocratique (a coalition of former political parties, into which the strongly Socialist resistance group, Libération-Nord, was integrated), and a coalition of the three other northern resistance groups (Ceux de la Résistance, Ceux de la Libération, and l'Organisation Civile et Militaire).²⁷

Jean Moulin's Death Is Followed by Rising Communist Influence

This achieved, Jean Moulin—the man who in 1940 had cut his own throat upon arrest by the Germans lest he talk under torture, had then recovered and escaped to England, and had then returned behind the lines—had established himself in France as leader of organized resistance under de Gaulle. He had not much longer to refine the organization. On June 10, 1943, his colleague, the commander of l'Armée Secrète, General Delestraint, was arrested and shot. A fortnight later, as Moulin met with the southern staff of l'Armée Secrète and local resistance leaders in a town near Lyon, the Gestapo smashed in the doors. When Moulin and the others failed to talk under torture, they were shipped off to German concentration camps. Moulin was dead on arrival.²⁸

Crisis followed. Without the strong central direction of Moulin and Delestraint, many regional resistance leaders began to revert to their earlier independence. This proved remediable, for the money, arms, and equipment available only through de Gaulle's BCRA were powerful levers. Not so readily eradicable was the influence achieved in the interim by the Communists.

In view of the blow dealt the resistance by Moulin's arrest, de Gaulle directed that the posts of national delegate and chairman of the CNR be separated. For chairman, the Communists threw their weight behind Georges Bidault, who was from Frenay's organization, Combat. Though the Communists had but one delegate on the six-member directorate of the CNR, they had ready sympathizers in the delegates from the Confédération Générale du Travail and from Mouvements Unis de Résistance. Bidault won. Neither a Communist nor a Communist sympathizer, Bidault nevertheless was a man fairly easily swayed; his election, while not putting the CNR under direct Communist control, meant that the Communists would seldom be openly opposed.²⁹

De Gaulle Institutes Political and Military Reorganization To Forestall Communists

Following the arrest in February 1944 of E. Bollaert, Moulin's successor as national delegate, de Gaulle moved to circumvent the Communist influence in the national council. Appointing a new national delegate, Alexandre Parodi, de Gaulle also named five others as members of a Délégation Générale de Charles de Gaulle and provided an order of succession in event of arrests. The Délégation Générale, de Gaulle decreed, was the direct representative of the provisional government of France and thus was predominant in all matters affecting France and the resistance. The CNR's role was only advisory.³⁰

Much the same denouement occurred on the military side of the resistance organization. Though de Gaulle appointed a successor to General Delestraint (General de Jussieu-Pontcarral; then, following his arrest, Gen. Alfred Mallaret-Joinville), the CNR in March 1944 set up a military committee, the Comité d'Action Militaire (COMAC), which presumed to have final say in military matters. Like the CNR itself, COMAC was not Communist dominated but was Communist oriented; of its three delegates—one each from north, south, and Francs-Tireurs et Partisans—one was a Communist and another a sympathizer. De Gaulle countered by strengthening his military delegation, sending to France two zonal military delegates and twelve regional delegates. Then, in April 1944, he superimposed on l'Armée Secrète a new headquarters, Forces Françaises de l'Intérieur (FFI), to which all military action groups were subordinate. The commander in chief, located in London, was Gen. Joseph Pierre Koenig.³¹

Thus General de Gaulle countered the Communists at the highest levels, but there still remained the danger that they might move at the time of liberation to seize control of local governments. This de Gaulle safeguarded against by compiling through the Délégation Générale a list of commissioners, prefects, and sub-prefects for every region and département. These men were to take office upon liberation in the name of the provisional government, while the regional military delegates assured orderly transfer of the resistance soldiers into the regular French army. The admiralty, meanwhile, prepared cadres to take over liberated ports; the

Ministry of Justice organized three delegations to reconstitute the courts; and a Mission Militaire de Liaison Administrative prepared to play the part of administrative jack-of-all-trades, dealing with such diverse tasks as repairing radio stations, supervising newspapers, protecting national monuments, and maintaining coal mines and public utilities.³²

Guerrilla Recruitment Rises in Response to German Reprisals and Deportation of Labor

While all this jockeying for position took place, the resistance itself was growing from individual, unorganized acts into a large-scale, concerted insurgency. Addition of the Communists to the rolls in June 1941 had marked the first turning point. The second came on August 21, 1941, in a Paris subway station. A young Communist, burning for revenge for a comrade executed two days before, fired two telling revolver shots into a German naval officer candidate.³³ As the Germans quickly countered by executing hostages, the resistance underwent an agonizing moment of reappraisal. But with every roll of German rifle fire, the ranks of the resistance grew. From this point on, the story of the resistance was written in blood.

The next turning point developed from an accord signed on July 1, 1942, by Vichy's Foreign Minister Pierre Laval and the Reich Plenipotentiary-General for Labor Fritz Sauckel in an attempt to satisfy Hitler's insatiable demand for foreign workers. By terms of this agreement, called the réleve, the French were to send 150,000 skilled workers to Germany in exchange for the repatriation of 50,000 French prisoners of war. Though the program was launched with great fanfare, few workers came forward, particularly after the first reports had filtered back of living and working conditions inside Germany. By October, four months after the first appeal, only 17,000 volunteers had left France. As it became increasingly obvious that the Germans would soon turn to forced labor and deportation, young men began drifting to remote farms, while others went off in groups into the forest and mountains. By the end of 1942 a strange word began to be heard in whispered conversations—maquis.³⁴

It was a Corsican word, meaning a piece of wild land; it had come to be applied to brigands who hid in the Corsican bush. The French now adopted it as overall title for their new form of resistance. The individuals within the maquis were called maquisards.

In February 1943, the expected compulsory labor decree, Service du Travail Obligatoire, was announced. At first it affected only men between the ages of 20 and 23, but later it was broadened to include almost all the able-bodied population. The reaction everywhere was swift and vigorous. Young men fled to the backlands, there to organize or be organized by previously constituted resistance forces into bands varying in size from a few men to several hundred. L'Armée Secrète helped hide, feed, finance, equip, and train them.³⁵

Allied Aid to the French Maquis

Authorities in London, particularly the British, were reluctant at first to arm the maquis for fear both of premature uprisings and of aiding revolutionary elements. The British also questioned how effective these isolated, relatively untrained little bands might be. But in the end they could not deny the poignant appeals for help. The first parachuting of arms to the maquis occurred in March 1943 in the Haute-Savoie. The amount of arms and equipment remained relatively small (there were 302 successful drops during 1943), but the restrictions were imposed less from will than from the number of aircraft that could be spared from other missions. Yet in deference to their own continuing fears, the British provided no machineguns, mortars, or other heavy weapons, but mainly light arms such as submachineguns. From lack of heavy weapons and sometimes from lack of any arms at all, many small maquis were easily wiped out by the Germans. Only after the D-day landings on June 6, 1944, after the maquis in Brittany demonstrated their prowess, and after more aircraft became available, were large parachute deliveries made and heavier weapons provided.³⁶

The mechanics of the delivery operation were relatively simple. Local leaders would transmit their needs and requests through coded messages sent by their radio operators, then anxiously keep vigil each night by their radio receivers for the BBC broadcast that would alert them to the hour and place of delivery. Almost since de Gaulle's broadcast of June 18, 1940, the BBC had served as a vital communications link, both as a means of coordinating activities and as a contact for supplies.

In terms of dollar value, Allied aid to France during all of World War II, including services and supplies in the post-D-day period, totaled \$3,462 million. Britain supplied a \$150-million treasury advance and \$435 million in services and supplies; Canada, \$25 million; and the United States, \$2,842 million (lend-lease).³⁷

The U. S. Office of Strategic Services (OSS) entered the program of aiding the resistance early in 1943, but not until January 1944, when OSS merged its resources in London with the British SOE in Special Forces Headquarters, did the Americans begin to participate in arms delivery. Though this produced a sharp upturn, American commanders, like their British colleagues, gave priority to the long-range bombing campaign against Germany and thus could release few aircraft for supplying the maquis.

Sending Men Into France To Work With the Maquis

In a related program to provide French-speaking organizers and radio operators for the maquis, the Allies came closer to meeting the demand. To supplement Frenchmen trained by de Gaulle's BCRA, the Americans began and the British continued to train both Frenchmen and French-speaking citizens of their own countries. Despite their late start, the Americans parachuted a total of 375 American and French officers into France, while the British over the years

sent 393 agents under their own auspices and 888 on behalf of the BCRA. But by the end of 1943, the supply of these teams was running out, while the demands of the ever-multiplying maquis continued to increase.

As an expedient, the Allies formed special three-man "Jedburgh" teams, named for the place in Scotland where they were trained, composed of Frenchmen and American and British officers and noncommissioned officers. Few of the Americans and British were able to speak French. Unlike earlier organizers, these men wore uniforms, at once an attempt—in deference to their inability to speak French—to give them full combatant status under the rules of war, to recognize the control the maquis had established over certain localities, and to show the French that invasion was not far in the future. The Americans also provided 374 uniformed officers and men in 11 teams called Special Operations Groups, composed of up to 34 officers and men armed and trained to fight with the maquis.³²

Internal Financing of the Maquis

The task of financing the maquis fell largely to the French themselves. The maquisards had to be paid at least a subsistence wage, and the resistance leaders pledged themselves to provide for their dependents and survivors. To augment the money brought in from London, funds were transferred by special arrangement with the treasury in Algiers and other money was obtained on promissory notes both from public banks in France and from savings accounts in the Poste, Telephone, et Telegraph (PTT).

In many instances, when the maquisards lacked funds, they requisitioned food from farmers and issued promissory notes, almost all of which were honored by the French government after the liberation. As might be expected, there were occasions when outlaw elements took advantage of the resistance to prey on their countrymen, but most requisitions were legitimate.³³

Growth of the Maquis Brings Axis Attack

By mid-1943, the maquis in the south, where the forests and mountains afforded ready refuge, were a source of concern to the Germans; in the southeast, they worried the Italians, who had moved into eight southeastern départements upon German occupation of the southern zone. There were 3,000 maquisards in the Jura, 350 in the Ain, 1,200 in Haute-Savoie, 1,000 in Savoie. By the fall of the same year there were 22,000 organized maquisards in the south and 8,000 individuals, while in the north, where the terrain was less suitable for hiding, the movement had spread to 21 départements.

So troublesome were the acts of sabotage, the thefts of arms and equipment, and the ambushes of convoys and lone vehicles that by July 1943 the occupying forces had begun concerted attacks against the maquis. The Italians in the Haute-Savoie moved first, almost wiping out the maquis there temporarily, but in the process teaching lessons of security that had a long-range

impact on the movement. From this time almost every maquis had its intelligence agents in the PTT, among the French police, and among the population, to warn against the coming of the enemy. Nevertheless, as those in London had feared, some of the maquis became too brazen and their groupings too large to be ignored, so that in February and March 1944 the Germans launched major attacks against the maquis on the plateau of Glières in the Massif Central and in the Ain.⁴⁰

Maquis Operations Prior to D-Day

For all the problems of equipment and supply, the advent of the maquis ~~changed~~ the face of the French insurgency from underground resistance to guerrilla warfare. The underground activities continued—providing hiding places and escape routes for airmen, Jews, and others wanted by the Germans; furnishing military intelligence for Allied planners; circumventing requisitions of food and slowing down factory production; sustaining morale and recruiting new resistance workers through the clandestine press—but more and more the resistance groups concentrated on sabotage, ambushes, and hit-and-run attacks on German depots and convoys. In 1942 there were 1,429 acts of sabotage important enough to be recorded by the Germans; by the winter of 1943-44, the monthly average had increased sixfold.

In an effort to avoid French civilian casualties that were a by-product of Allied air attacks on the railroads, the resistance set out to prove that more damage could be accomplished by sabotage. In the first three months of 1944, the insurgents sabotaged almost three times more locomotives than were damaged by air attacks. Between June 1943 and May 1944, the resistance damaged 1,822 and destroyed 200 locomotives, damaged 1,500 and destroyed 2,000 passenger cars, and damaged 8,000 freight cars.

For Vichy officials and for informers and double agents—all considered to be French traitors—the resistance reserved a special fury. Vichy officials were sometimes murdered in their offices. In full daylight near the Arc de Triomphe a resistance fighter cut down Julius Ritter, the notorious Fritz Sauckel's first assistant. Sometimes the insurgents openly attacked German prisons to rescue captured comrades. At Amiens, in the north, the resistance and the Royal Air Force collaborated in an ingenious raid to rescue prominent French leaders from prison. In the south, the maquis exercised virtual control of some départements; it was the threat of this control to routes of communication that prompted the German attacks in the Massif Central in February-March 1944.⁴¹

The French Plan To Rise on D-Day

Yet the overall aim of the resistance was to get ready for the Allied invasion and to assist in the liberation of France. As D-day neared, the FFI staff in London drew up detailed plans for four major sabotage programs designed to delay the movement of German reserves against

the Allied landings: Plan VERT, against the railroads; Plan TORTUE, against the roads; Plan BLEU, against electrical power; and Plan VIOLET, against underground cables. These plans were to be set in motion beginning on the eve of D-day by coded messages over the BBC, e.g., "Rocks must grow, leaves rustle;" or "The tomatoes must be picked." Each message was applicable to a specific plan and a specific region. Thus, to avoid exposing resistance forces far from the site of the invasion to German reprisals, some areas were to be alerted to action only after Allied armies had spread out from the beachhead and liberation neared.⁴³

Meanwhile, General de Gaulle, whose main headquarters had been transferred to Algiers, was having last-minute problems with his allies. The Americans, in particular, were still doubtful about the military utility of the resistance movement and equally dubious about the capacity of the Fighting French to provide a provisional government for France. As they prepared to administer the territories they liberated, they even printed their own currency. General de Gaulle, still with no formal mandate from the French people to govern, remained unrecognized as provisional head of state. On June 3, 1944, de Gaulle changed the name of his French Committee of National Liberation to the Provisional Government of the French Republic, but neither Great Britain nor the United States formally accepted the change. Not until the eve of D-day were any arrangements made by the Supreme Allied Commander, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, to recognize General Koenig as chief of the FFI, and only then did Eisenhower make de Gaulle and Koenig privy to the invasion plans. Full recognition of the French leaders had to await the invasion itself and the revelation to the Allied leaders that in France the name de Gaulle had become synonymous with liberation.⁴⁴

As the long-awaited moment of Allied invasion approached, an army of insurgents stood at its posts in France, but nobody knew how effective it might be, nor even how many men made up its ranks. Some say there were 100,000 active resistance fighters at the start of 1944 and that the figure increased rapidly month by month as arms became available. Some say there were 200,000 at the hour of the invasion. Nobody kept a roster.⁴⁵ And who can say that those bearing arms were the only active members of the resistance army? With some notable exceptions, all Frenchmen by June of 1944 were attuned to liberation and to helping in some small way to achieve it.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

As early as the fall of 1943, Field Marshal von Rundstedt, the Commander in Chief in the West, had reported that he knew resistance groups were preparing to act in concert with the invasion, but he was powerless to eliminate the threat they posed to his lines of communications.⁴⁶ This report was valid testament to the fact that German efforts to destroy the French insurgency by repression had failed. Given the way the Nazis had come to power in Germany and the

use they wanted to make of France, perhaps repression was inevitable, even though there were those among the occupying forces who saw the folly of it.⁴⁶ In any event, it was abundantly clear by June 1944 that the Germans had failed to pacify the country.

Originally, the Germans had sought to gain French cooperation through persuasion rather than force. In the early days, there were minor efforts to appease Vichy and even an attempt to found a political party made up of collaborationists, the Rassemblement National Populaire. And from the German Embassy in Paris, a propaganda section ground out one appeal after another, urging the "marriage" of France and Germany in the New Order of Europe. The German ambassador, Otto Abetz, who had married a French woman, was held up as an example. Abetz himself tried to court the French in such ways as moving the body of Napoleon's son from Vienna for reinterment with tremendous pageantry in the Hôtel des Invalides.⁴⁷ But few except opportunists and extremists of the far right were impressed. The nature of the German New Order was all too soon revealed by the early restrictions on movement, press, and radio, and by the curfews and the economic levies. The Germans had in their victorious armies a strong argument for cooperation, but after 1942, when these armies ceased to conquer, France was no longer impressed.

German Organization in France

Ruled from Paris by General von Stülpnagel, the Military Governor, occupied France was divided into three subordinate commands—Southwest France, with headquarters at Angers; Northeast France, with headquarters at Dijon; and Northwest France, with headquarters at St. Germain-en-Laye. Later, after the southern zone was occupied, a fourth command was established—Southern France, with headquarters at Lyon. Each of these sectors had several regional (Oberfeldkommandaturen) and district (Feldkommandaturen) headquarters, though in the south, to keep alive the myth of Vichy, these were called liaison staffs (Hauptverbindungsstäbe and Verbindungsstäbe) and were manned by civil service rather than military personnel. Relations with Vichy were maintained through both diplomatic channels (German Minister Krug von Nidda) and military channels (Lt. Gen. Alexander Neubronn von Eisenburg), the latter serving primarily as a listening post for Stülpnagel and for the high command of the armed forces.

The basic responsibility for security was held by Stülpnagel. Since tactical forces were authorized to deal with police matters only in the narrow coastal strips in the west and south, he depended on the police troops of the Höherer SS und Polizeiführer (SS Police Chief) in Paris, under SS Gruppenführer Karl Albrecht Oberg.

Oberg's organization was hydra-headed. Although the main dependence was upon some 2,000 agents of the SD (Sicherheitsdienst, the Nazi party's security service), a Befehlshaber der Orpo (Ordnungspolizei, the uniformed regular police) and a Befehlshaber der Sipo (Sicherheitspolizei, Nazi party security police) were also under Oberg's command. Under the Sipo

came detachments of Kriminalpolizei (criminal police) and the Gestapo (secret state police). Each of these organizations had its own detachments both in Paris and at the four sectional headquarters.

There were also detachments of Verstärkter Grenzaufwachtdienst (VGAD, or border police) operating along the Swiss, Italian, and Spanish frontiers, and of the Abwehr, the intelligence service of the German Army General Staff. Though both of these were at first fairly independent of General Oberg, they became subordinate in 1943 to the Reichssicherheitshauptamt (RSHA, or overall German police system) via the Sipo. A cloak-and-dagger group, the Abwehr had posts in Paris, Marseille, Lyon, and seven other large French cities, and it was second only to the SD in importance among German police.

In each of the four sectional headquarters, Oberg had some German army or Waffen-SS troops, usually two or three Landesschützen (security) battalions, one or two "local defense" regiments, and small military police detachments. (As an example, the 200th Landesschützen Regiment, the 19th SS Police Regiment, and several Ost battalions made up of anti-Bolshevik Russians were at Lyon.) Some of these troops were stationed at the regional headquarters, and small detachments of two dozen men went to each district headquarters. For important police operations, these troops could be pooled within the region or, with Oberg's approval, on a broader basis. Through General Stülpnagel, Oberg could call upon tactical commanders to furnish additional troops if needed. Including the army, Waffen-SS, and Ost troops, there may have been as many as 160,000 German police troops in France.

Organisational Confusion and Rivalry Hurt German Security

This layering or over-organization of police forces was compounded by the presence in France of a plethora of other headquarters: Luftwaffe, navy, rear echelon army, and various German government organizations such as Sauckel's labor office, a propaganda office responsible directly to Reich Foreign Minister Joachim von Ribbentrop, and the Organization Todt—a paramilitary group responsible for building fortifications along the coasts. There were almost a million Germans in France, including 52,000 soldiers in Paris alone, and an additional 50,000 German civilians.

Though the French might bewail the fact that they had to support this mass, they reaped the benefit of the conflicting and overlapping authority. One headquarters bid against another for the best accommodations, the choice supplies. The Ambassador, Otto Abetz, and the Commander in Chief in the West, von Rundstedt, were convinced that the forced labor decree would do exactly what it did, break the back of French patience; but their protests went unheeded in the face of Sauckel's determination. Frenchman fearful of the Gestapo might not have realized it, but Hitler's dictatorship had produced within the German administration a welter of confusion and a struggle for power and position far outstripping France's unfortunate Third Republic. Paris, in the words of one ranking German officer, was "a confusion of Babel."⁴⁸

Hostages and Mass Reprisals

Almost from the start the Germans took hostages, not hostages in the classic sense of leaders and people of influence, but people against whom they wished to wreak particular vengeance, usually Communists and Jews. And for the first killing of a German, 30 Frenchmen paid with their lives. A few weeks later, on September 16, 1941, Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel, chief of the OKW, decreed that all acts of resistance must be assumed to be of Communist origin and that for each German soldier killed, 50 to 100 Communists must die. The decree was not clear as to how it should be determined that a person was a Communist. Three months later Hitler issued what became known as the Nacht und Nebel decree, whereby all acts of resistance were to be punished either by death or by deportation to Germany, with no information provided the victim's relatives as to his fate. Both these decrees were cloaked in various guises of court legality, but even this was abolished after the Allied invasion. Executions, Hitler finally ordered, were to be carried out on the spot.⁴⁹

Mass reprisals became commonplace. In November 1943, 400 men of Grenoble were deported for having sung "la Marseillaise"; a month later, 100 more for no apparent reason. At Nantua, in December 1943, after insurgents drove a male and female collaborator naked through the streets, the Germans deported 150 men. In March 1944, in retribution for the killing of a member of the SD in Limoges, 26 Frenchmen were executed; the next day, in response to a similar act in a nearby village, 23. At the town of Ascq, in the Nord, 86 were executed on April 1, 1944, as punishment for a railroad accident that the Germans contended was sabotage. During the night of May 11, following an act of sabotage near the town of Figeac, almost the entire male population of 800 was arrested and subsequently deported. But the most notorious reprisals were reserved for the period following the Allied invasion.

General Security Measures and the Creation of the Milice

During the first three years of the occupation, the Germans hunted down the insurgents primarily through harsh police methods: frequent and unannounced checks on papers, frequent and unannounced searches of homes, close checks on ration cards, stringent restrictions on travel, infiltration of resistance groups, torture of prisoners and threats against their families to make them talk, use of double agents and paid informers, and imprisonment of all who were suspect for any reason. They maintained close liaison with the French police, but were increasingly frustrated except in the southern zone.

In the south, Vichy created several special police brigades specifically to keep track of Communists and Jews. Out of the Légion des Combattants, Vichy's attempt to provide a semblance of a political party backing the government, the regime's Secretary for Maintenance of Order, Joseph Darnand, recruited extremists and recidivists to create, in January 1943, a police force called the milice. Darnand's miliciens taught even the Germans a thing or two about

brutality. Numbering between 25,000 and 30,000, the milice later spread to the occupied zone and were particularly active in Paris.⁵⁰

German Intelligence Penetrates French Organization, But Resistance Grows

German counterinsurgency was undoubtedly aided by the general French disdain for security. To some degree, this insurgent weakness was responsible for many German successes against resistance leaders, particularly in the early days. The raids in mid-1943 in which General Delestraint and Jean Moulin were captured had obviously been planned for a long time, but the Germans waited until the French themselves had revealed further details of their organization before striking. At Bordeaux, where the regional resistance chief, a Colonel Grandclément, defected in the early days, the Germans kept him at his post until nearly the eve of the invasion when the resistance had grown and they had complete details on it, including the location of large caches of arms.

Yet the Germans found that for every resistance leader taken, for every radio operator captured, for every insurgent who defected, others took his place. This was almost ensured by the harsh economic levies, the execution of hostages, the forced labor decree, and the political deportations—these, plus a systematic persecution of Jews that began promptly and resulted in perhaps 140,000 deportations out of a Jewish population of 320,000.⁵¹ The German strategy against the resistance was based on the theory that terrorism would prompt the French population to prevent acts of sabotage. But the population as a whole did not possess this power, even had it so chosen, and the reprisals and the wide publicity given the terror served merely to feed the resistance with recruits.

German Defense of Their Installations and Lines of Communication

Unable to prevent ambushes, raids, and sabotage by annihilating the insurgents, the Germans employed various tactics for protection. Guards at depots and other installations were doubled and changed at irregular intervals. Guard posts were established along major rail lines, and some lines were patrolled. To protect military convoys, armored vehicles were placed at head and tail. Sometimes motorcycles equipped with machineguns preceded the column to check for roadblocks and ambushes, and in troublesome regions machinegunners sprayed the roadsides as the column progressed. Civilians were often carried in prominent spots on the vehicles, a tactic later used during the fighting in Paris to safeguard tanks. To protect against "tire bursters" or other devices laid on the roads to damage tires, the Germans sometimes fixed brooms to the front bumpers of their vehicles. To circumvent mines on the railroads, they pushed flatcars, sometimes with civilians aboard, in front of locomotive. . All trains

had heavily armed guards. Unable to trust French railway workers, the Germans brought in 25,000 of their own trainmen to help keep the railroads running.⁵²

Large-Scale Attacks Against the Maquis

Obviously conducting a losing campaign, the Germans early in 1944 changed their strategy to include coordinated attacks by large units, including artillery and sometimes armor and aircraft, to wipe out nests of resistance. The first of these large-scale efforts resulted in the fight on the Plateau of Glèzes in February-March 1944 where more than 12,000 German police and troops practically exterminated a band of some 500 maquisards. At almost the same time the equivalent of three German divisions were sweeping the Ain. The first genuine pitched battle began on June 2, in the Massif Central where, over the course of 19 days and throughout the period of the D-day landings, 20,000 Germans and 11,000 French were engaged.

To pinpoint hostile groupings, the Germans carefully plotted the pattern of sabotage and parachute deliveries, then moved swiftly to seal off the affected region with roadblocks. Sometimes an area was small enough to be swept systematically. In one case the Germans surrounded a large forest and set fire to it section by section, eventually driving the insurgents into the open. The fighting in these engagements was fierce. The Ost battalions, the SS units that had served on the Russian front, and the milice were particularly brutal, and the French knew that capture was tantamount to death.

German Counterintelligence and "Playback" Operations

By these efforts the Germans seized sizable stocks of insurgent arms and supplies. In some instances, after capturing radio operators, they continued to man the radio posts, often carrying out the deception long enough to arrange several deliveries of arms on fields staked out by German police. In one week, from February 22 through March 1, 1944, they seized during delivery 61 radios and 1,205 containers of arms, and captured 11 British officers.

The Germans asserted that they captured "the FFI code" early in 1944.⁵³ How much use they could make of it is problematical, for the messages to each local group were in a code intelligible only to that particular group. In the first days of June, German agents who had penetrated resistance groups did pick up some of the prearranged signals from the BBC alerting the resistance to stand by for later messages directing execution of D-day sabotage plans, but these reports were given no real credence at higher German headquarters.⁵⁴

For all the German efforts and successes, the resistance continued to multiply, so that by mid-1944 the Germans in France faced not only impending Allied invasion but a concerted insurgency in their midst. It had ceased to be a question of a "terrorist movement," noted the commander of Army Group G, who was responsible for the Mediterranean coast; it was more nearly one of the presence of an "organized army" behind the German lines.⁵⁵

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

On the night of June 4, 1944, anyone accustomed to listening to the coded messages from the BBC could have discerned that something out of the ordinary was taking place. There were many more messages than usual, and instead of being directed at dispersed listeners, they seemed unusually integrated and consistent. To one in the know, they applied not to various localities but to the whole of France.

Contrary to plans drawn up by the French themselves, Allied headquarters had decided to implement the four major sabotage plans--railroads, roads, electricity, and cables--all over France, for to alert only one region was to pinpoint for the Germans the site of the invasion and to forgo maximum effect against the enemy's facilities. Apprised at the last minute of the change in plans, neither General de Gaulle nor General Koenig protested. All through the next day and the night of the 5th, members of the resistance stirred, performing dutifully the tasks assigned them, and all too often so openly that the Germans quickly discerned who was responsible. In the Vosges, for example, 34 maquisards at Corcieux set off to attack hundreds of Germans in a nearby garrison. The maquisards were wiped out, the village was subjected to a reign of terror, and some of the leading citizens were shot.⁵⁶

There were similar tragedies over the entire country. To many in the resistance, the messages and a broadcast by de Gaulle himself on D-day, June 6, called for open insurrection. When they responded, the Germans cut them down. On June 10, the FFI commander, General Koenig, issued clarifying orders, but for many this was too late. In the Vercors, for example, where insurgents in the south had, in effect, proclaimed an independent republic in the name of France, the counterorders arrived in the midst of a pitched battle. Who but the Germans could break it off?

Maquis Contributions to Success of Normandy Invasion

Few statistics exist to measure the effectiveness of the four major D-day sabotage plans. To the bulk of the German army, the operations may have appeared as mere pinpricks, but they were sufficient to impel the Germans to deploy considerable forces to protect their lines of communications. In the month of June, the resistance made 486 rail cuts. On D-day, 52 locomotives were blown up in one operation at Amberieu. The next day 26 trunk lines were unusable, including lines in the invasion area between Avranches and St. Lô, between St. Lô and Cherbourg, and between St. Lô and Caen. This was achieved despite the fact that in Normandy, as in most other coastal regions, the Germans had fairly well quarantined the coastal strip to a depth of 30 to 40 miles. French sabotage, when added to Allied bombing, measurably curtailed the supplies, particularly artillery ammunition, available to the Germans for the Normandy fighting. By June 20 no rail line was functioning in the valley of the Rhône.⁵⁷

Though the resistance could do little to thwart the movement of German local reserves, movement of strategic reserves was markedly delayed. The French contend that they delayed up to 12 divisions for from 8 to 15 days. The most dramatic incident, conceivably a direct contribution to Allied success in the early days of the invasion, was delay of the 2d SS "Das Reich" Panzer Division caused by rail sabotage and by direct action against major columns. Ordered to move from Toulouse to counterattack in Normandy, first elements of the armored division did not traverse the 400 miles until 12 days after receiving the movement order. Harried by the resistance and strafed by the RAF, which was kept informed by the resistance, some 4,000 of the division were killed and 400 captured en route. In frustrated fury against the insurgents, men of this division summarily shot all male occupants of the village of Oradour-sur-Glane (Haute-Vienne) and herded the women and children into the village church, there to burn them alive. There were a thousand victims.⁵⁸

De Gaulle Consolidates Political Victory

Meanwhile, Gen. Charles de Gaulle had been making his first moves to achieve full recognition of his status as head of the provisional government of France. Coming ashore in Normandy on June 14, he received enthusiastic welcomes in Bayeux and several smaller towns. With an ease that was to be repeated time after time in other sectors, he successfully implanted his hand-picked commissioner, prefects, and subprefects in the Bayeux region.

Three days later, on June 17, General Eisenhower officially acknowledged General Koenig as commander of French Forces of the Interior and subsequently accorded him the same status as any Allied commander serving under the Supreme Allied Command. Though Allied governments would retain reservations about de Gaulle until the time of the liberation of Paris, after Bayeux there was little question but that de Gaulle had triumphed.⁵⁹

French Achievements in Brittany and Increased Supplies From the Allies

It remained for the insurgent forces in Brittany to provide the first incontrovertible evidence of the values of the resistance to the Allied armies. When the landings took place, there were 19,500 men in the resistance in the five départements of Brittany, of whom no more than half were armed. Two months later, when operations to clear the peninsula began, there were 31,500 in the resistance, of whom about 20,000 were armed. Among the groups was a battalion of French paratroopers trained under the British Special Air Service (SAS). After dropping into Brittany on the eve of D-day and executing sabotage missions to delay German troop movements to Normandy, the paratroopers came under command of the local FFI chief, Col. Albert M. Éon.⁶⁰

Despite a costly pitched battle against the Germans on June 18 at Saint-Marcel, which resulted from premature assembly of resistance units, the FFI in Brittany were ready to give battle when the American Third Army turned into the peninsula early in August. Detachments as strong as 6,000 men seized possession of strategic high ground in the interior. One force took and held an airfield at Vannes; others guarded bridges and defiles. Everywhere men of the FFI kept the Americans informed on the whereabouts of the Germans and assumed the tasks of mopping up bypassed pockets and guarding prisoners. So impressive was the resistance in Brittany that General Eisenhower later specifically cited its activities.⁶¹

A growing appreciation of the value of the resistance, plus increasing availability of aircraft, prompted the Allies to step up their supply deliveries after D-day. In June they carried out 1,263 successful sorties, doubling the number flown in April. On June 25, 108 U.S. Flying Fortresses launched the first mass air drop in daylight, followed by another on Bastille Day (July 14) with 320 successful sorties, including 85 in the Vercors. Another drop, on August 1, was of comparable strength, followed on September 9 by a last mass drop in the Doubs by 72 planes. From June through September 1944 over 75,000 containers, 25,000 packages, and 1,100 men (not counting the parachute battalion in Brittany) were parachuted into France.⁶²

German Lines in Southern France Are Threatened by Maquis

Meanwhile the Germans in the south were becoming increasingly concerned about their routes of communication and withdrawal. They were particularly perturbed by threats posed by the maquis in the Massif Central and in the Vercors to routes up the Rhône valley and by the maquis in the Vercors to the Route Napoléon through Grenoble. They also were concerned with threats by maquis in the Pyrénées and the Massif Central to the communications link—Bordeaux—Toulouse—Carcassonne—joining the two German armies in the south and southwest. To deal more effectively with these threats, the commander of Army Group G obtained approval to extend the "combat zone" to all the coastal départements and to most of the next tier inland, a total of 26.⁶³

Throughout June and July, German forces totaling the equivalent of two or three divisions patrolled and fought to keep open the Bordeaux-Toulouse-Carcassonne route. These included a reserve infantry division, contingents of a reserve corps, and two Kampfgruppen of the 11th Panzer Division. In early July a force of approximately division strength attacked resistance strongholds in the Cévennes, declaring that they had killed 335 maquisards. In mid-July tactical forces rescued police and milice whom the maquis had surrounded in the Ain and Jura and reopened supply lines north of Lyon. The Germans claimed 500 insurgents killed and 12,000 to 15,000 dispersed. In the meantime, two other forces of unspecified strength but large enough to be commanded by general officers were employed in the Massif Central near Limoges and Clermont-Ferrand.

The Battle in the Vercors

In third week of July 1944, following preliminary skirmishes in June, the Germans launched one of their largest set-piece attacks, this against the maquis in the Vercors. Here the maquis had assembled a small army of 3,500, plus 30 British and U.S. soldiers. Following an Allied air drop on July 14, German tactical aircraft launched a series of destructive raids. On July 21 came a concentric ground attack supported by artillery and some tanks and the landing of a glider task force of 400 men in the center of the French positions. For two days and nights the maquisards, with the help of the American Special Operations Group, kept the glider troops surrounded, but Luftwaffe strikes on the third day cleared the way for relief. By nightfall of July 23, the maquis had been forced to relinquish most of their key positions. That evening the French commander, Col. Joseph Zeller, ordered the maquisards to fight their way out in groups of 30 to 40 men. Many, including the Americans, made it, but some continued to fight within the Vercors until August 9.

The Germans admitted losses in the Vercors of 65 killed, 18 missing, and 133 wounded, out of a total force of possibly 20,000, including the 157th Mountain Division and contingents of the 9th Panzer Division. The maquis lost 1,031 killed and 288 captured. The Germans partially destroyed five villages and burned four others to the ground, including La Mure, where they killed all inhabitants of the twelve homes. Well over a hundred civilians were murdered in the Vercors, and the Germans climaxed their infamy by massacring the wounded in the emergency hospital left behind by the maquis.⁶⁴

Maquis Achievements in Southern France

But what terror had not accomplished in the early days of the resistance, increased terror could not now achieve. All through the south of France the maquis continued to organize, train, and arm against the coming of the second Allied invasion. Allied officials estimated that by the time of their landings in the south on August 15 (Operation ANVIL), more than 70,000 insurgents in the south were armed. Everywhere they rose, fighting with and in advance of the Allied troops. Side by side they fought with regular French troops to liberate Marseille and Toulon, in the process saving some dock and port facilities from destruction.⁶⁵

As the Germans began to withdraw from the south on August 19, the resistance forces harassed the moving columns and captured many small garrisons and isolated units. For weeks no railroad from the south had been open, and the Germans time after time had to fight to ensure passage on the roads. Some columns avoided the main roads altogether in their quest for an escape route.

To the resistance fell the task and the honor of liberating one large corner of France entirely unaided. This was the vast quadrilateral bounded by the Mediterranean, the Spanish frontier, the Atlantic, the Loire, and the Rhône. It encompassed five regions—Montpellier,

Toulouse, Limoges, Clermont-Ferrand, and Bordeaux. The FFI freed it all except for the fortified banks of the Gironde estuary, where the Germans held out until the end of the war to deny the Allies use of the port of Bordeaux. One German column of 18,000 men under Generalmajor Botho H. Elster, harassed at every turn by the resistance, finally cheated its French pursuers by making contact with an American reconnaissance unit south of the Loire and surrendering to a U.S. division. The resistance leaders were understandably piqued, for by all rights credit for the mass surrender belonged to the FFI.⁶⁶

The major struggle in the southwest was not that between French and Germans but the contest between Communists and non-Communists in the resistance for control of local governments. The resistance forces in four of the five regions had strong contingents of Communists, and in three of these Communists or crypto-Communists had achieved positions of authority among the insurgents. But by dexterity, alacrity, maneuver, and subterfuge, the non-Communists succeeded everywhere except in a few small towns and villages in gaining control and maintaining it until Gaullist-appointed officials could take over.

French Accomplishments in the North and the Dilemma Over Paris

In the meantime, in the north of France, the resistance had been performing a signal service in protecting the southern flank of the American columns that were rapidly pursuing the Germans toward the east. Almost every American unit received help in one way or another from these seemingly unorganized, undisciplined men who appeared out of nowhere with FFI bands on their left arms. But the crowning achievement of the resistance, and the ultimate test of authority between Gaullists and Communists, was reserved for the city that to Frenchmen everywhere represents France itself—Paris.

Under Allied plans, Paris was to be bypassed, both to avoid destructive fighting in the city and to postpone the necessity of diverting military supplies to feed the population.⁶⁷ The FFI commander, General Koenig, warned the inhabitants against uprisings; but in the early days of August, as thousands of Germans began to evacuate the city, Parisians grew restless. A strike by railroad workers that began on the 15th and spread to the police and other government employees promoted the atmosphere of crisis. By the 18th, members of the FFI were moving about some sections of the city quite openly. Resistance posters appeared, calling for a general strike, for mobilization, and for insurrection. When German reaction to these manifestations appeared to be feeble, small local FFI groups began on August 19, without central direction, to seize police stations, town halls, newspaper buildings, and the seat of the municipal government, the Hôtel de Ville.

The French challenge, while serious, was hardly formidable, for few of the Parisian FFI were armed, and thousands of German combat troops with tanks and artillery still held the city.

The German commander, Generalleutnant Dietrich von Choltitz, was ordered into Paris on August 7 to maintain the peace, defend the city to the last man, and assure its ultimate destruction. Choltitz was personally reluctant to turn the city into a battlefield; but with less principled superiors watching his moves, he could be provoked only so far.

With the help of the Swedish Consul-General, Mr. Raoul Nordling, resistance leaders arranged with Choltitz an armistice that went into effect the night of August 19, at first for only a few hours, then later extended for an indefinite period. But many Communists, hoping to take control of the insurrection and then the government, refused to honor the cease-fire.

De Gaulle Moves To Enter Paris

Apprised of these developments, Generals de Gaulle and Koenig asked General Eisenhower on August 21 to move immediately against Paris; but not until the next day, after de Gaulle had threatened to invoke his powers as head of state to order the 2d French Armored Division into the city, did Eisenhower consent. Responding to this threat, to appeals from French envoys who described the situation in Paris as chaotic, and to indications that the U.S. government had no objection to de Gaulle's entry into Paris, he agreed late on August 22 to send the French division.

In Paris, meanwhile, the resistance and hordes of unarmed civilians had already responded to the cry, "Aux barricades!" They took over entire sections of the city, but in many places—at the École Militaire, in the Rue de Rivoli near Choltitz' headquarters, and elsewhere—the Germans showed no signs either of leaving or of giving up. At some points they counterattacked with tanks against the barricades and buildings held by the resistance.

The news from inside the city provided additional impetus to the French armored columns, but to little avail. Opposition from German units in the southern suburbs was too strong, and overjoyant welcomes from civilians meant added delays. The day of August 23 passed, then much of the 24th, and French armor was still held up in the outskirts.

The French Take Paris—Militarily and Politically

As the American command committed the 4th U.S. Infantry Division to help, the French commander, Gen. Jacques Philippe Leclerc, decided to send a small reconnaissance party through back streets to try to reach the Hôtel de Ville. The little column arrived shortly before midnight. The next day, as German defenses melted away, both French and American troops advanced swiftly through the city to the accompaniment of civilian delirium. Only at isolated points was there real resistance, and tanks made quick work of these. Choltitz himself surrendered in the Hotel Majestic. By nightfall of August 25, the battle of Paris—no minor engagement, for the FFI lost somewhere between 800 and 1,000 killed, another 1,500 wounded, and civilian losses in both categories were perhaps double these—was over.⁶⁵

In the internecine struggle for control of the government that immediately ensued, the Gaullists once again proved more astute and better disciplined than their Communist opponents. De Gaulle himself arrived unannounced during the afternoon of August 25 amid a riotous reception from the populace. Despite protests from the American tactical commander that the city was still unsafe, de Gaulle the next day reviewed a parade by part of Leclerc's armored division up the Champs Elysées. Scattered sniping and the discovery of 2,600 Germans with artillery pieces in the Bois de Boulogne failed to detract from the glory of the occasion.

With the liberation of Paris, all France was at least symbolically free. There would be fighting in Alsace and Lorraine for many long months; in January a German counteroffensive would threaten the revered city of Strasbourg; and resistance forces would help to contain German pockets in some of the Atlantic ports until the day of victory, May 8, 1945. But the climax had now been passed.

The Costs and Effects of the French Role During the Occupation

France could be justifiably proud of the role of the resistance in the liberation of the country. Its cost had been paid in citizens' lives. From the beginning of the occupation, the Germans arrested over 600,000 Frenchmen, of whom 250,000 were deported to Germany. Only 35,000 of these returned. In addition, the Germans executed 30,000 Frenchmen in France, and another 24,000 were killed in resistance fighting.⁶⁹

There had been excesses—some used the cloak of the resistance to settle personal feuds, some to punish without fair or legal judgment, some to achieve personal gain, others to claim a patriotic record that they did not in fact possess—but the accounts on the credit side far exceeded the debits. When de Gaulle moved promptly after the liberation of Paris to disarm the resistance, there were on the whole few incidents, and at least 137,000 joined the regular army for the continuing campaign against Germany.

Despite internal conflicts, emotional misconceptions, German repression, and underestimation and even mistrust on the part of Allied leaders, the French, with Allied aid, had played a noble role in regaining their freedom. In the process, an originally obscure général de division, Charles de Gaulle, had created the basis for a future French government that would eventually assure for France a new place in the councils of the world.

NOTES

¹ A concise summary of the campaign may be found in Charles B. MacDonald, "Fall of the Low Countries and France," in Vincent J. Eposito, ed., A Concise History of World War II (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1944), pp. 53-67.

² The case against the generals is ably presented in Col. A. Goutard, The Battle of France 1940 (New York: Ives Washburn, Inc., 1959).

³ For population, geography, topography, and so forth, see Encyclopaedia Britannica (1952 edition), IX, pp. 581-97. A map showing the line of demarcation is to be found in Arnold and Veronica M. Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe (Survey of International Affairs, 1939-1946) (London: Oxford University Press, 1954).

⁴ Henri Michel, "Aspects politiques," in Revue d'Histoire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale, Numéro Spécial—L'Occupation de la France, No. 54 (April 1964). For information on the zones, see also, in the same issue, François Boudot, "Aspects économiques," and Michel de Bouffrd, "La Répression."

⁵ Sir Desmond Morton, "The Free French Movement, 1940-1942," in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe, p. 437; Willis Thornton, The Liberation of Paris (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1962), p. 60.

⁶ Alfred Cobban, "Vichy France," in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe, pp. 338-41.

⁷ Ibid., pp. 355-59.

⁸ Ibid., pp. 341-44, 349-57.

⁹ Patricia Harvey, "Industry and Raw Materials," in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe, pp. 197-98; Cobban, "Vichy France," in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe, pp. 345-49; and Michel, "Aspects politiques," and Boudot, "Aspects économiques," loc. cit.

¹⁰ For German organization, see Charles V. P. von Luttichau, "German Operations in Southern France and Alsace, 1944," unpublished MS. prepared from contemporary German records in the Office of the Chief of Military History (OCMH), Department of the Army; Michel, "Aspects politiques," de Bouffrd, "La Répression," loc. cit.; General Rivet, "Abwehr et Gestapo en France," in Revue d'Histoire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale, No. 1 (November 1950); and Lt. Gen. Bodo von Zimmerman et al., "OB WEST (Atlantic Wall to Siegfried Line), A Study in Command," MS. in files of OCMH.

¹¹ See Thornton, The Liberation, pp. 20, 23, 27, 34, 46, 58-59, 62.

¹² Philippe de Vomécourt, An Army of Amateurs (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1961), p. 23.

¹³ Thornton, The Liberation, p. 58; de Vomécourt, An Army of Amateurs, pp. 30-32.

¹⁴ Thornton, The Liberation, pp. 59-60, 71; Cobban, "Vichy France," in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe, pp. 387-88; Robert Aron, France Reborn (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1964), pp. 72-73; Germaine de Tillon, "Première résistance en zone occupée," in Revue d'Histoire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale, No. 30 (April 1958).

¹⁵ Michel, Histoire de la Résistance (1940-1944) (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1950), pp. 17-19.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 19-20.

¹⁵See ibid., pp. 20-22.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 19, 40-43; Cobban, "Vichy France," in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe, p. 419; Aron, France Reborn, p. 79; Thornton, The Liberation, pp. 75-76; Guillaumin de Bénouville, The Unknown Warriors (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1949), pp. 58-68, 100-101, 106, 118-22.

¹⁷Thornton, The Liberation, pp. 62-63; Michel, Histoire, p. 24.

¹⁸See Marie Granet, "Défense de la France," in Revue d'Histoire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale, No. 30 (April 1958); see also Michel, Histoire, p. 25.

¹⁹Thornton, The Liberation, pp. 73-74; Michel, Histoire, pp. 23-33.

²⁰Thornton, The Liberation, pp. 72-74; Michel, Histoire, pp. 30-31; Cobban, "Vichy France," in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe, pp. 387-88.

²¹Unless otherwise noted, this section is based primarily on the following: Michel, Histoire, pp. 7-15; Morton, "The Free French Movement, 1940-1942," pp. 434-74, and Cobban, "Vichy France," pp. 397-406, 411-18, in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe.

²²The Times (London) of June 29, 1940, cited in Morton, "The Free French Movement," in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe, pp. 437-38.

²³See Thornton, The Liberation, pp. 68-71.

²⁴In addition to overall sources cited, see Thornton, The Liberation, pp. 90-92, and Michel, Histoire, pp. 42-43.

²⁵Cobban, "Vichy France," in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe, pp. 419-20; Michel, Histoire, pp. 41-44; de Bénouville, The Unknown Warriors, p. 204; Thornton, The Liberation, p. 76.

²⁶Thornton, The Liberation, p. 76.

²⁷Aron, France Reborn, pp. 75-77; Michel, Histoire, p. 49. Cf., Thornton, The Liberation, pp. 76-77. See also Dominique Lapierre and Larry Collins, Is Paris Burning? (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965), passim.

²⁸Aron, France Reborn, p. 78.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Ibid., pp. 83-88.

³¹Thornton, The Liberation, pp. 77-78.

³²Ibid., pp. 45-47; Cobban, "Vichy France," in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe, pp. 409-10; de Bénouville, The Unknown Warriors, pp. 120-21, 186-87.

³³For life in the maquis, see the reservoir of memoir literature, notably George Millar, Waiting in the Night (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co., 1946); Russell Braddon, The White Mouse (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1957); Joseph Kessel, Army of Shadows (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1944); and de Vomécourt, An Army of Amateurs. See also, Numéro Spécial, Les Maquis dans la Libération de la France, Revue d'Histoire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale, No. 55 (July 1964).

³⁴Michel, Histoire, p. 97, and the memoir literature, passim.

³⁵See Marcel Vigneras, Rearming the French, in the series, U.S. Army in World War II (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1957), pp. 401-402; and Marcel Badaut, "La Résistance en France et les Alliés," in European Resistance Movements 1939-1945, Proceedings of the Second International Conference on the History of the Resistance Movements Held at Milan 26-29 March 1961 (New York: Pergamon Press, 1964), pp. 384-85.

³⁸Badaut, "La Résistance en France," in European Resistance... Second Conference, pp. 384-85; and Vigneras, Rearming the French, pp. 304, 401-402.

³⁹Michel, Histoire, p. 96, and the memoir literature, passim.

⁴⁰Michel, Histoire, pp. 98-100.

⁴¹For accounts of these actions, see the memoir literature, particularly de Bénouville, The Unknown Warriors, passim. See also, Badaut, "La Résistance en France," in European Resistance Movements... Second Conference, pp. 388-89; von Luttichau, "German Operations in Southern France and Alsace"; and Gordon A. Harrison, Cross-Channel Attack, in the series, U.S. Army in World War II (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1951), p. 204. The raid at Amiens is discussed in Col. Livry-Level, The Gates Burst Open (London: Arco Publishers, Ltd., 1955).

⁴²See Aron, France Reborn, pp. 8-98.

⁴³Thornton, The Liberation, pp. 93-96; Cobban, "Vichy France," in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe, pp. 424-25; Forrest C. Pogue, The Supreme Command, in the series, U.S. Army in World War II (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1954), pp. 231-33, 236.

⁴⁴Badaut, "La Résistance en France," in European Resistance... Second Conference, p. 389; and Harrison, Cross-Channel Attack, p. 198.

⁴⁵Charles V. P. von Luttichau, "The French Resistance Movement," MS. in Office of the Chief of Military History, prepared from contemporary German records. Unless otherwise noted, the section on counterinsurgency is based on this and von Luttichau's previously cited manuscript, "German Operations in Southern France and Alsace," plus General Rivet, "Abwehr et Gestapo en France," Marcelle Adler-Bresse, "Témoignages allemands sur la guerre des partisans," and Maurice Lombard, "Les maquis de Bourgogne," in Nos. 1 (November 1950), 53 (January 1964), and 55 (July 1964), respectively, of Revue d'Histoire de la Deuxième Guerre Mondiale; the previously cited articles by Henri Michel, François Roudot, and Michel de Bouard in Numéro Spécial, L'Occupation de la France, No. 54 (April 1964) of the same periodical; and Zimmerman et al., "OB WEST (Atlantic Wall to Siegfried Line), A Study in Command."

⁴⁶See Thornton, The Liberation, p. 28.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 29-30.

⁴⁸Quotation from Field Marshal Erwin von Witzleben (for a time Commander in Chief in the West), as given in von Luttichau, "German Operations in Southern France and Alsace," p. 13.

⁴⁹These decrees are discussed in Clifton J. Child, "The Political Structure of Hitler's Europe," in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe, pp. 150-52.

⁵⁰Michel, Histoire, pp. 121-22; Aron, France Reborn, pp. 68-70, 404; Cobban, "Vichy France," in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe, pp. 421-22; Thornton, The Liberation, pp. 50-51, 102-103; de Vomécourt, An Army of Amateurs, pp. 102-103.

⁵¹Figures from James Parkes, "The German Treatment of the Jews," in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe, p. 164. For the nature of the anti-Semitic campaign, see Thornton, The Liberation, pp. 41-45.

⁵²For a concise résumé of insurgency and counterinsurgency methods, see Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEP), Combatting the Guerrilla (SHAEP Manual, 1 May 1945), pp. 9-21. Figures on German workers from Aron, France Reborn, p. 153.

⁵³Von Luttichau, "The French Resistance Movement," p. 10.

⁵⁴See Harrison, Cross-Channel Attack, pp. 206, 275.

⁵⁵Generaloberst Johannes Blaskowitz, as quoted in von Luttichau, "The French Resistance Movement," p. 22.

¹⁰ Aron, France Reborn, pp. 92-100.

¹¹ Harrison, Cross-Channel Attack, pp. 205-206; Martin Blumenson, Breakout and Pursuit, in the series, U.S. Army in World War II (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1961), p. 181; Badaut, "La Résistance en France," in European Resistance... Second Conference, pp. 380-91.

¹² De Bouërd, "La Répression," loc. cit.; and Adler-Bresse, "Témoignages Allemands sur la guerre des partisans," loc. cit.

¹³ Aron, France Reborn, pp. 48-63; Pogue, The Supreme Command, pp. 236-37.

¹⁴ Aron, France Reborn, pp. 8-17, 116-47.

¹⁵ Ibid.; Pogue, The Supreme Command, p. 238; Blumenson, Breakout and Pursuit, passim.

¹⁶ Badaut, "La Résistance in France," in European Resistance... Second Conference, pp. 384-85; Vigneras, Rearming the French, pp. 301-304, 307; and Wesley Frank Craven and James Lea Cate (eds.), Europe: Argument to V-E Day, Vol. III of The Army Air Forces in World War II (Chicago: University of Chicago Press [1951]), pp. 502-505.

¹⁷ Von Luttichau, "The French Resistance Movement," p. 18.

¹⁸ For the fight in the Vercors, see Lynn M. Case, "The Maquis Republic of Vercors," The Infantry Journal, LX (April 1947), 35-37. German and maquis losses are from von Luttichau, "The French Resistance Movement," p. 28.

¹⁹ Details of the campaign in the south may be found in Aron, France Reborn, pp. 322 ff.

²⁰ In addition to Aron, France Reborn, see Blumenson, Breakout and Pursuit, pp. 654-55, and de Vomécourt, An Army of Amateurs, pp. 13-15, 278-89.

²¹ For the story of the liberation, see Thornton, The Liberation, pp. 118 ff.; Aron, France Reborn, pp. 235-319; Blumenson, Breakout and Pursuit, pp. 590-628; Lapierre and Collins, Is Paris Burning?, passim; and Pogue, The Supreme Command, pp. 239-43. The first three of these works have drawn heavily on the other major source on the liberation, Adrian Dansette, L'Histoire de la Libération de Paris (Paris, 1946).

²² Thornton, The Liberation, p. 195.

²³ Ronald Seth, The Undaunted—The Story of Resistance in Western Europe (London: Frederick Muller, Ltd., 1958), p. 297; Aron, France Reborn, p. 482; Michel, Histoire, p. 124; and Trial of the Major War Criminals Before the International Military Tribunal, Vol. VI (Nuremberg: International Military Tribunal, 1947), p. 325.

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Chapter Six

**GREECE
1942-1944**

by D. M. Condit



GREECE (1942-1944)

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The German occupiers of Greece, aided by their Italian and Bulgarian satellites and a Greek puppet government, successfully employed military operations and terrorization techniques to contain, if not destroy, the Allied-supported Greek resistance groups that sprang up during World War II.

BACKGROUND

The guerrilla warfare that occurred in Greece during World War II was internally dominated by the issue of communism and took on many of the dimensions of the cold war that later developed between the nations of the West and those under communism. At the time, however, with the Soviet Union allied with the Western Powers in the most devastating war of this century, only a few took note. Ironically, although the Axis Powers were ideologically and militarily committed to the destruction of communism, their counterinsurgent tactics were such that, in the end, they fostered the growth of the Greek Communist forces.

The setting for these events was a small country strategically located on the northeastern fringe of the Mediterranean. Bounded by Albania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Turkey to the north, Greece dominated the Ionian Sea on the west and the Aegean on the east and looked out upon the Mediterranean to the south. From Roman times, control of Greece had been essential to those who would command the eastern Mediterranean area; in modern times, a cornerstone of British policy had been to ensure that the country did not fall into unfriendly hands. In World War II, German plans were to challenge this policy.

Its strategic location and its natural beauty notwithstanding, the land itself was economically unproductive. Of Greece's 50,000 square miles—an area about the size of New York State—more than half is mountainous, a quarter suitable for forest or pasturage, and only a fifth arable. Although grains were a major agricultural product, prewar Greece was forced to import about 40 percent of her needs. Because her other crops, such as tobacco, olives, currants, and other fruits, were those for which demand was elastic, the country was vulnerable to shifts in the world market.

More industrialized than other Balkan countries, prewar Greece nevertheless had to import approximately a third of her manufactured goods. Income from the Greek merchant marine traditionally provided the means to pay for imports. By either Western European or North American standards, the Greek standard of living was low.

The Transportation Network

Because the road and rail network in Greece was rudimentary, it was of extreme importance from a military point of view. There were only 1,700 miles of railroad, and only one north-south rail line connecting Greece with Europe. This single-track, standard-gauge line came through Yugoslavia to Salonika, then followed the eastern coast of Greece down to Athens and its port of Piraeus. Supplies destined for the Peloponnesus, that part of Greece lying south of the Gulf of Corinth, had to be reloaded at this point onto cars suitable for the meter-gauge tracks of that area. From Piraeus, supplies could also be shipped to the Greek island of Crete and thence to North Africa.

Many Greek roads were fit only for carts or foot traffic, more trails than roads in the modern sense; only a few were paved and suitable for vehicular traffic. One major road roughly paralleled the rail line from Salonika to Athens in eastern Greece. In western Greece, one north-south road connected the cities of Ioannina, Arta, and Agrinion, then turned east to Athens. Across northern Greece, only one major road, leading from Ioannina to Trikkala to Larisa, connected with the Salonika-Athens highway. The transportation system—so limited in extent and traversing such difficult terrain—was to offer an extremely vulnerable target for guerrilla warfare.

Social and Political Conditions on the Eve of War

The Greek people—numbering about 7,300,000 at the outbreak of World War II, or fewer than the present population of New York City—had both high birth and high death rates. In 1928, when the last prewar census was taken, over 40 percent of the people could neither read nor write, and the educational system beyond the elementary grades was open to few. Population exchanges with Turkey in the 1920's had made the Greek population quite homogeneous: 96 percent spoke Greek and 97 percent were of the Eastern Orthodox faith. Ethnic minorities—the Jews, Turks, Chams, Vlachs, and Slavophone Greeks—constituted less than 5 percent of the population.

Outside the cities and major villages, Greek life on the mainland was frequently circumscribed by the mountain environment and its concomitants of poverty, insularity, and suspicion of strangers. Strongly religious, the village Greeks projected an emotional faith into their daily lives. And underlying all of these qualities in the mountain areas, where the guerrilla war was to play such an important role, was an element of primitivism—a stoic acceptance of the sad accidents of fate, as well as an acceptance of the need to become at times the instrument of fate,

even through the use of violence. Greece had a tradition of both individual and national resistance, glorified in the fight against Turkish oppression in the 19th century and lingering on in the custom of *vengeance* or private vengeance that persisted in many mountain and island communities.

Though few miles separated them, Greeks in the mountains lived under very different circumstances from those in the cities, particularly Athens, the capital and the center of the country's intellectual and political life. In Athens, the game was politics, characterized by its players' quick perception, sophistication, and individuality of reaction. Political parties were formed, changed, reorganized, and reconstituted in a constant flux.

In the years between the two World Wars, Greece had undergone a period of great instability which had been overcome only with loss of democratic liberty. In 1935 the Greek monarchy, which had been suspended for a number of years, was restored when King George II returned to the throne; a year later he acceded to a dictatorship under Gen. Ioannis Metaxas. To achieve economic gains and political stability, Metaxas repressed political parties. During these years before World War II, the Communist Party of Greece (*Kommunistikon Komma Ellados—KKE*), whose secretary general Nikos Zachariades was imprisoned, went underground into clandestine activity, an experience that was later to serve it well. The parties of the center, on the other hand, generally declined during the Metaxas period.

Mussolini's Italian Invasion Is Turned Back

Political events in Greece soon became subordinate to military developments. In the spring of 1939, the Italian dictator Benito Mussolini, Axis partner of the Germans, invaded Albania and was soon bogged down in a major campaign in that mountainous and forbidding country. He therefore decided that he would extend the war into Greece unless Metaxas allowed Italian troops to use that country as necessary. Although he was believed to be pro-German, Metaxas,* backed by the King, rejected the Italian ultimatum of October 28, 1940, with its three-hour deadline, and called the Greeks to arms.

The Greeks responded in a burst of heroism, and by the end of the year the Italian Eleventh Army had been driven out of Greece and 30 miles back into Albania. By February 1941, the Italians were fighting a desperate battle, but the Greek attack had run out of supplies and steam. As it became apparent that the Germans would come to the rescue of the Italians, the British, who had already sent a small force into Greece, pulled more troops out of their North African campaign in order to buttress Balkan resistance and fulfill their treaty obligation to defend the territorial integrity of Greece.

* General Metaxas died in January 1941 at the height of Greek success and his own popularity.

German Forces Invade and Conquer Greece

To the German dictator Adolf Hitler, the 1941 situation in the Balkans presented an intolerable threat to his plans for a future major eastern offensive against his ostensible ally, the U. S. S. R. The Balkans, including the nonacquiescent countries of Yugoslavia, Albania, and Greece, constituted the southern flank of this forthcoming theater of war; and Hitler felt that unless he secured it the success of his Russian campaign would be jeopardized. The Balkans also constituted a supply route, a staging area, and air bases for the North African theater, where German forces were already engaged in a duel with British armies for control of the Middle East.

On April 6, 1941, German armies attacked through the Balkans with 27 divisions. Eleven days later, Yugoslavia capitulated; and on the 23rd, Greek forces surrendered. The main British force and some Greek troops, as well as the Greek monarch and government, were able, however, to withdraw to Crete; and the battle continued there until the end of May, thus upsetting the German timetable. By then the British navy had effected an evacuation, and the Greek King and government had been safely withdrawn to Africa. But all of Greece, including Crete and the myriad other Greek islands, was in Axis hands.

Greece Is Occupied by Three Axis Nations

German plans for the occupation of Greece were predicated upon their desire to disengage as soon as possible, to send their troops into the invasion of Russia, scheduled to occur on June 21, 1941. The Germans expected no trouble in Greece; and that country, being neither Jewish nor Slavic, was not marked for "special" treatment. Hitler himself paid public homage to the Greek cultural tradition. The Greek army was paroled and sent home, in a move intended both to obviate the need to shelter, clothe, and feed a large number of prisoners of war and to establish rapport with the Greeks by indicating respect for their show of valor.

The Germans maintained direct control in only four areas: two areas in northeastern Greece (that around Salonika, and the mainland area and certain Aegean islands bordering neutral Turkey); a small area in central Greece, including the port of Piraeus; and most of the island of Crete. The Italians, only lately roundly defeated by the Greeks, were allowed to occupy the largest share of mainland Greece, including Athens and the Peloponnese, as well as eastern Crete and various other islands. And the Bulgarians, traditionally feared and hated by the Greeks, were assigned two islands and an adjacent mainland area in northern Greece.

To administer most of the mainland area, a Greek puppet government was set up—subservient to the Axis, and particularly to the Germans. Under the succeeding prime ministerships of the general Georgios Tsolakoglou, the gynecologist Constantinos Logothetopoulos, and the politician Ioannis Rallis, this government was simultaneously weak, inadequate, and generally ineffective. Many civil servants refused to serve under it, and many who did serve apparently engaged in slowdowns.

Occupation Policies Create Great Hardship

The first year of the occupation indicated what life under the Axis would be like. In Crete, the Germans took reprisals for the active part that the people had played in the earlier battle for the island. Italy planned to annex the Ionian Islands. Bulgaria annexed and began to colonize her mainland zone of occupation, most of which was farming land; during the first year, 100,000 Greeks were driven out of western Thrace and those who remained faced extreme economic duress.

Conditions were appalling, particularly in urban areas. The food supply, insufficient to feed even the Greeks, was used for Axis troops and civilians. In the winter of 1941-42, the people in and around Athens suffered severely from cold and hunger. The fuel supply gave out, the bread ration was cut to about a quarter of normal intake, and on some days even this amount was not available. Half a million people were reduced to depending entirely on soup kitchens. Unemployment was considerable; and within two years inflation drove prices up to a thousand times the prewar level, while wages rose but a hundredfold. On the black market, the only place many basic supplies could be obtained, prices were beyond the reach of most Greeks. Each morning during that winter the puppet government sent out carts to collect the bodies of those who had died in the streets during the night. The young, the old, and the homeless were the first to die. A German source estimated that infant mortality rose from 8 to 50 percent.

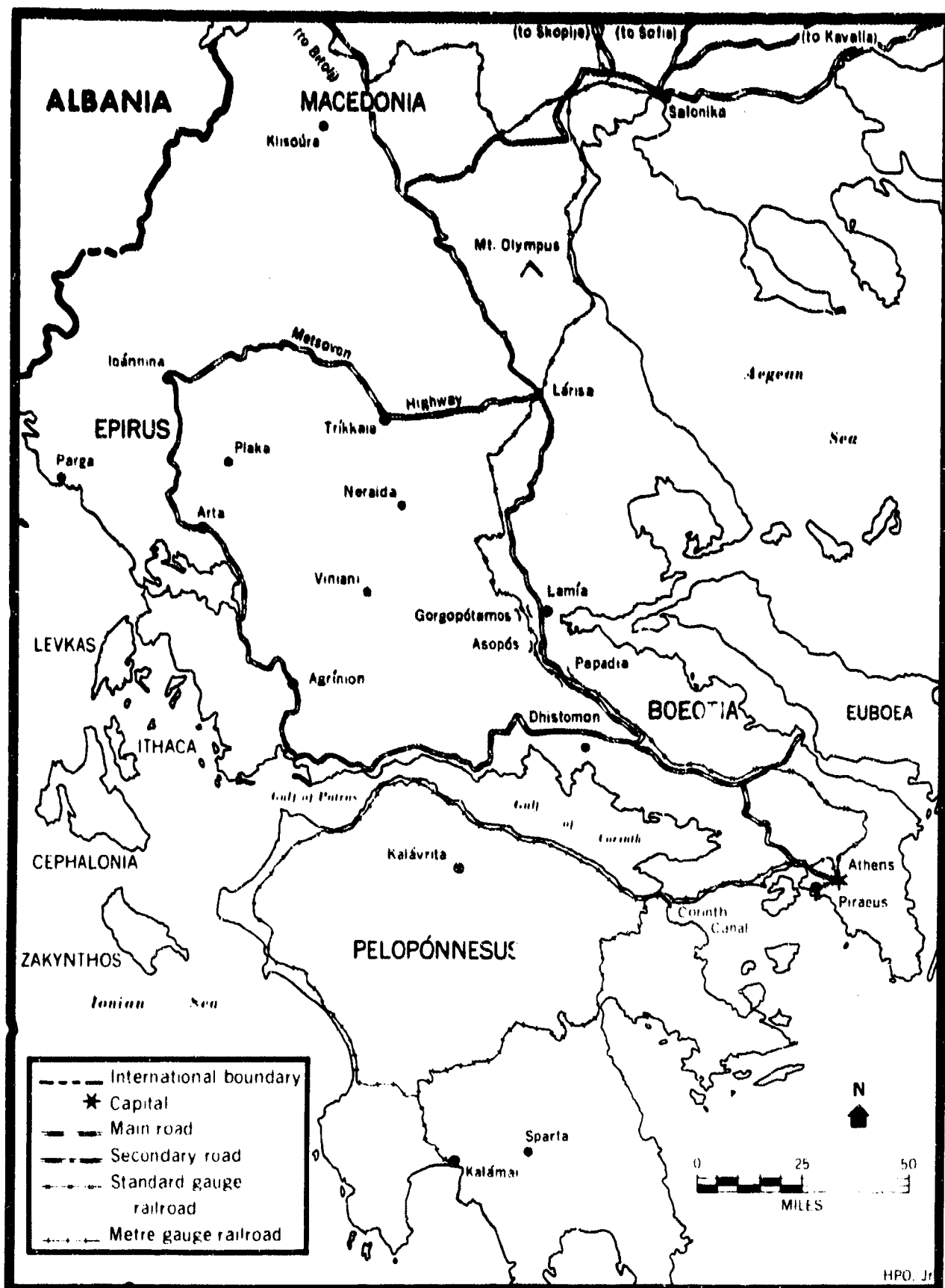
Quite unintentionally, the Axis created conditions that were to aid in the growth of an insurgency against itself: Greek manpower had been returned to Greece, occupation policies had engendered instability and discontent, and Greek pride had been irreparably offended by the presence of Bulgarians and Italians as occupiers.

INSURGENCY

Active insurgency did not start immediately upon the victory of German arms in Greece. The first months following the Greek defeat may be termed a period of psychological adjustment to the misfortunes of war, the appearance of a trilateral foreign occupation, and the slowly dawning awareness of the exact meaning of these fateful adversities. Of course, some evidence of anti-Axis sentiment appeared almost immediately after the occupation began: foreign flags were pulled down, British soldiers were helped, foreign broadcasts were listened to, and rumors and stories floated around. But such incidents as occurred were on the whole trivial.

The Beginnings of Organized Resistance: EKKA

In the summer of 1941, however, there began to be formed a number of resistance organizations, mainly in Athens and in other large cities. Of these, three became militarily and politically significant during the war as active guerrilla organizations operating in mainland Greece—EKKA, EDES, and EAM/ELAS.



GREECE (1942-1944), DETAIL

The first to be organized was EKKA (Ethniki kai Kolnioniki Apeleftherosis, National and Social Liberation), formed in July 1941 and representing the political center. Militarily, it was opposed to the occupation; politically, it was against either a monarchical or a Communist government in postwar Greece. Its best known leader was Col. Dimitrios Psaros, who in March 1943, led a guerrilla band into the mountains. Unfortunately for Psaros, he came into conflict with Communist guerrillas who twice fought and nearly destroyed his band in 1943 and finally, in April 1944, crushed his third attempt to create a guerrilla force, at which time Psaros himself was captured and killed. Although EKKA left a political heritage in Athens, it played no further military role.

EDES Guerrillas Under Napoleon Zervas

The second group, EDES (Ellinikos Dimokratikos Ethnikos Syndesmos, Greek Democratic National League), was also organized in Athens in the late summer of 1941 to oppose the occupation authorities. EDES originally stood for restoration of a measure of republicanism in postwar Greece through such means as a democratic constitution and a plebiscite on the question of the monarchy. By mid-1942, the group was able to field a small guerrilla force of about 150 men under Col. Napoleon Zervas, an officer who had been ousted from the Greek regular army for political activities in the 1930's and had not been allowed to fight in 1940-41.

Zervas, whose reputation in Athens was that of a sport and a gambler, created a new career for himself in the mountains of Greece. Rotund, warm and jolly in appearance and manner, and respected by most of his men and officers, he was particularly admired by the Allied officers who worked with him. Zervas eventually built up a highly centralized organization over which he maintained personal control; at the same time, he also seemed to have a good grasp of the guerrilla tactics his forces had to employ if they were to survive.

Organization of the Communist Resistance Movement

By far the most powerful resistance group in wartime Greece was the Communist-dominated EAM/ELAS. EAM (Ethnikon Apeleftherotikon Metopon, National Liberation Front) was the political front; ELAS (Ethnikos Laikos Apeleftherotikis Stratos, National People's Liberation Army) was formed somewhat later. Although EAM was nominally composed of five parties, the controlling group was the Communist Party of Greece (KKE). Two of the other member parties were considered to be KKE satellites; only the remaining two, the Socialist Party of Greece and the Popular Democratic Union, were truly independent. EAM's objectives—resistance to the occupiers and a postwar government based on the people's will as expressed in free elections—were expressed in the most generic and attractive terms.¹ Although the aims thus stated were almost

*Sometimes transformed to "Republican" to avoid any connotation of Communist connection.

universally acceptable in wartime Greece, their actions indicated other unstated objectives: resistance to the occupiers would be allowed only through EAM and its affiliates, and free expression of the people's will would inevitably lead to making postwar Greece a Communist state.

EAM had a central committee whose members represented occupational groups, urban centers, and rural communities, as well as the five parties. Although the KKE, like the other parties, held only one seat on the central committee, it dominated both the committee and EAM through its control of workers' organizations, urban neighborhood groups, and rural community organizations. A whole series of organizations, best known by their initials, were controlled by EAM. In villages, EA was set up to do relief work; ETA, for tax collection; EPON, for organizing youths; and a local EAM committee, for overseeing and interpreting EAM wishes. EEAM, the Workers' National Liberation Front, was the principal EAM-controlled urban organization. A terrorist and disciplinary organization, OPLA, carried out secret EAM assignments. EAM is estimated to have involved from 500,000 to 700,000 Greeks in one or another of its organizations during the war; EAM itself claimed that in late 1944, at the height of its strength, its enrollment in all subsidiaries reached 1,000,000.²

Early Operations Under EAM

In 1941 and 1942 EAM's efforts were directed primarily at perfecting its organizational structure. Through its labor organization, it supported, with some success, a number of small-scale strikes and demonstrations.

Although EAM was not to organize its guerrilla army of ELAS until the end of 1942, by that autumn it did control a number of small guerrilla bands under the direction of Aris Veloukhiotis (born Athanasios Klaras and generally known as Aris), who was himself a Communist under EAM discipline. Dark-bearded, short, dour, and silent, Aris was known to be a practicing homosexual and pederast, both cruel and brave, a severe disciplinarian. One of the most remarkable men of the Greek resistance, he was later described by a British officer who knew him well as "an intelligent, able man with no heart, without human pity, an excellent psychologist, a fanatical leader of men."³

Introduction of British Forces Into Greece

Thus by the fall of 1942, there were many Greek resistance organizations, but of the three that carried a major political thrust, only EDES and EAM had any guerrilla forces in the field, and these forces were just getting started. This situation was to be rendered immensely more complex by the events of that fall, which introduced a British Military Mission (BMM) onto the Greek scene.

In September 1942, Allied forces and fortunes were still at a low ebb, while German victories were at their height. Of the European countries, only Great Britain and Russia were

actively engaging Axis armies, the latter in a life-and-death struggle on her own soil. In Africa, the German forces of Gen. Erwin Rommel had recaptured Tobruk and advanced to the El Alamein line, within 70 miles of Alexandria. British forces had yet to make a breakout attempt from El Alamein, and it was important to this effort to cut Rommel's main supply line, which ran north through Crete and Greece to Yugoslavia and thus to central Europe.

Since Allied airpower was insufficient to interdict this line, the British turned to a desperate expedient. They decided to send in a coup de main party of twelve men who would seek the aid of the Greek guerrillas under Zervas, about whom they knew, and hit the supply line at one of its weakest points--any one of three main bridges carrying the only north-south railroad through Greece. The party was dropped into Greece in late September; it made contact with the guerrillas under both Zervas and Aris, and, with their joint cooperation, successfully sabotaged the Gorgopotamos bridge in November 1942, putting the rail line out of order for six weeks.

Allies Decide To Support the Greek Guerrillas on a Permanent Basis

In a rapid change of plans, the Special Operations Executive (SOE), the British agency responsible for the Gorgopotamos party, decided not to exfiltrate it as planned but to leave it in Greece to "volunteer" to work with the Greek guerrillas. The twelve members of the original party then became liaison officers with the guerrillas.⁴ These twelve were soon augmented and Greece was divided into four main areas, each under a senior liaison officer. By the summer of 1943, British strength had reached some 30 to 40 men, and was probably over 100 by the next summer. These men were commanded by Brig. E. C. W. ... ers until the summer of 1943 and after that by Lt. Col. (later Col.) Christopher Montague Woodhouse; both commanders had been in the original Gorgopotamos party.

In the fall of 1943 the BMM to the Greek guerrillas was converted into the Allied Military Mission (AMM) by the addition of a U.S. component. After recalling one American officer, the U.S. Office of Strategic Services (OSS), in December, airdropped Maj. Gerald K. Wines, a man highly compatible with Woodhouse, to head the American component of the mission.⁵ Although Allied in name and personnel, the mission was dominated by the British, whose interests in Greece were recognized as paramount. The United States had fewer liaison officers in Greece than the British and, in general, they echoed British policy.

Along with men came supplies and money for the Greek guerrillas. The long air trip, poor weather conditions, and lack of aircraft originally limited the amount of supplies that were sent; later the issue of communism and the use of supplies as a lever for controlling guerrilla behavior also held down the amounts. A total of 2,514 tons of supplies was dropped to the Greek guerrillas by Allied planes, in 1,040 successful sorties (78 percent of the total number).⁶ Some supplies were also brought in by ship after the guerrillas were able to acquire and hold a navigable port on the west coast of the mainland. Gold sovereigns were given to the guerrillas to

help defray the cost of supporting active members and to sustain destitute and homeless Greeks in the area; extremely rough, and possibly low, estimates indicate that this cost amounted to several million dollars.

Before the end of 1942, the situation in Greece began to appear somewhat less dismal than before to the guerrillas. The British breakout from El Alamein in October and the failing German drive at Stalingrad had changed the fortunes of the war; the final outcome, previously much in doubt, now seemed more hopeful for the Allies. Furthermore, within Greece, the success at Gorgopotamos, the presence of the British mission, and the tangible evidence of forthcoming external support made it psychologically and economically feasible for the guerrilla bands to grow.

Communists Form a Guerrilla Army, ELAS

The Communists in EAM were quick to take advantage of the opportunity. In December 1942, just after Gorgopotamos, EAM organized its National People's Liberation Army (Ethnikos Laikos Apeleftherotikos Stratos), whose Greek initials of ELAS approximated the Greek word for the country, Ellas. Interestingly enough, EAM did not choose the redoubtable Aris to command ELAS. Instead, it looked for a man of sufficient repute and distinction to be acceptable to non-Communist Greeks, particularly officers, whom EAM wished to attract into ELAS. Finally, in April 1943, it found in Col. Stephanos Saraphis the man to head its guerrilla army—an appointment the more remarkable because his small band of guerrillas had only weeks earlier been attacked and disbanded by Communists who had then led him in chains through village streets where people shouted "traitor" at him. Notwithstanding the past, Saraphis made a good military commander in the eyes of EAM/ELAS. Though not a Communist, he was so anti-British that he apparently preferred even Greek Communists to British-affiliated non-Communists.⁷ Organizing motley groups of guerrillas into something resembling a regular army* of approximately 4,000-man divisions, with technical services and training facilities, Saraphis formed an army better prepared to take over Greece than to take on the occupation armies.

ELAS Is Organized so as To Maintain Communist Influence

The growth of ELAS presented a problem to the Communists, whose numbers were small in relation to the movement they controlled and whose influence was being spread thin as the organizational structure multiplied.⁸ The regular army officers who followed Colonel Saraphis into ELAS were not Communists; moreover, the Communist aim was to draw all of the most respectable elements of Greek life into some aspect of EAM/ELAS activity. The Communists were in a sense taking the calculated risk of losing control over the resistance organization through the sheer weight of non-Communist adherents. Of necessity, therefore, the KKE had to devise ways

* In addition, ELAS controlled a naval section, comprising mainly small vessels; this was formed in the winter of 1943-44 and was known as ELAN, the Greek People's Liberation Navy.

of manipulating both people and organizations so as to maximize Communist control with the use of a minimum number of Communists.

The Communists solved their problem by setting up a triumvirate command for the General Headquarters (GHQ) of ELAS. As the GHQ was organized in May 1943, Saraphis was in charge of military operations only; Aris was capetanos, responsible for such matters as unit morale, propaganda, recruitment, quartermaster duties, and relations with the civilian populace; and the Communist Andreas Tsimas, as representative of the EAM Central Committee, was political adviser and the most important figure in the GHQ. When Tsimas was posted to Tito's partisan headquarters in Yugoslavia* in the autumn of 1943, the acting secretary general of the KKE, Georgios Siantos, took over this post.

This triumvirate command structure persisted throughout EAM/ELAS echelons down to the tactical level, where the capetanos, almost always a Communist, performed the duties of a political adviser. In the spring of 1944, the post of political adviser was abolished, but the persons who had held the post usually remained in staff positions. The Communist-controlled political organization, EAM, always retained an element of direct authority over its military arm, ELAS.

Guerrilla Strengths and Areas Compared

EAM/ELAS guerrillas soon outstripped the forces of Zervas' EDES, which had reached approximately 5,000 men by the summer of 1943. From a force of 5,000 men in the spring, ELAS grew to a claimed strength of almost 20,000 in the fall of that year. Furthermore, because it controlled a far larger area of Greece, it was recruiting at a far faster rate than EDES. The maximum strength of EDES, in the summer of 1944, was 10,000 to 12,000 men. EAM/ELAS at this point controlled an area more than four times the size of that of EDES. By spring of 1944, Saraphis estimated that ELAS had about 30,000 men organized into 10 divisions; this figure is believed to have reached 40,000 by the summer, possibly 50,000 by October.

Political Considerations Become Increasingly Important in Allied Councils

The growth of EAM/ELAS and the hard evidence of its Communist aims, particularly its constant attacks on other guerrilla bands, were not lost on the British. At the same time, however, Brigadier Myers felt that the immediate need to use EAM/ELAS for Allied military objectives outweighed, at least at that time, the political challenge EAM presented for the postwar period. In the spring of 1943, he sought to offset EAM/ELAS strength through a National Bands Agreement, which assigned specific areas in Greece to various guerrilla groups, all of whom

*See Chapter Eleven, "Yugoslavia (1941-1944)."

agreed to cooperate and to obey a Joint General Headquarters composed of representatives of all recognized guerrilla bands and of the British Middle East Command. This agreement, though signed by EAM/ELAS, EDES, EKKA, and the British, was soon sabotaged by EAM/ELAS. However, possibly because of Myers' threats to limit supply deliveries, EAM/ELAS did cooperate with the British in June and July 1943 for Operation ANIMALS, an important cover operation in Greece designed to mislead the Germans into believing that an imminent Allied invasion, planned for biolly, would occur in Greece.

During the summer of 1943, Brigadier Myers was recalled to Middle East headquarters in Cairo for discussions. He was exfiltrated in a British plane which picked him up behind German lines on a landing strip built at Neraida by the Greeks under the supervision of a British liaison officer. Taking along guerrilla leaders who wanted to meet with members of the Greek government-in-exile, Myers arrived in Cairo and soon found himself in the midst of a political imbroglio. Communist demands presented by Tsimas at this time alerted the Greeks in Cairo and Prime Minister Winston Churchill in England to the tenor of EAM/ELAS aims. In this highly charged situation, Myers became persona non grata to King George II and did not return that autumn to Greece, where Colonel Woodhouse took over.⁹

Henceforth, the Communist menace latent in the Greek guerrilla situation was a recognized fact of life. Churchill now regarded the political threat implicit in EAM/ELAS as more important than its possible military contribution to the Allied cause. Inside Greece, therefore, the mission of the British liaison officers was to work with the guerrillas, to try to get them to fight the enemy rather than each other—and, most important, to keep EAM/ELAS from attaining such strength that it could seize power over all of Greece.

During the next year, the relations of the Allied Military Mission with the guerrillas ranged from invariably excellent in the case of Zervas and EDES to often execrable in the case of EAM/ELAS. From the fall of 1943 to the fall of 1944, when Axis forces left the country, EAM/ELAS movements were predominantly political in meaning even when military in appearance.

ELAS Guerrillas Get Italian Weapons and Attack EDES

EAM/ELAS was greatly aided in its maneuverings when, in the fall of 1943, it found an independent source of arms and ammunition. In September, following the armistice with the Allies, the Italian armies in Greece (as elsewhere) capitulated, and about 10,000 to 12,000 well-armed troops of the Pinerolo Division surrendered to the combined headquarters of the guerrillas and Colonel Woodhouse, with the proviso that Italians willing to fight the Germans might keep their arms. EAM/ELAS actually accepted the surrender, since it was in control of the territory in which the division was stationed. Within days, EAM/ELAS managed to dissipate the strength of the Italians; and in mid-October it disarmed the troops completely, thus freeing itself from dependence, for the while at least, on British-supplied arms and ammunition.

With weapons at hand, the forces of EAM/ELAS now set out to destroy the guerrillas of EDES, their strongest competitor. But simultaneously the Germans, taking over in Greece from the Italians, began a series of antiguerrilla drives that threatened the very existence of the insurgent movement. In addition, the British resupplied Zervas very heavily and, though down to 70 men at one point, he managed to pull through.

EAM/ELAS Sets Conditions for Guerrilla Truce

Sporadic fighting in the three-way combat went on all autumn, and the internecine guerrilla warfare ended only in early 1944, when EAM/ELAS set its terms for a cease-fire: (1) Zervas was to repudiate collaborators in EDES, (2) guerrillas were to remain in their current positions, and (3) a conference of guerrillas and the Allied Military Mission (AMM) was to be held to discuss a united guerrilla army and a government of national unity.

The first condition was met. On February 19, 1944, representatives of EAM/ELAS, EDES, EKKA, and the AMM signed a document stating that they regarded the Axis-sponsored Greek puppet government as the enemy of Greece. At the same time, Zervas repudiated certain members of EDES as collaborators. Seemingly incidental, this repudiation had great significance. First, it was an indication of what was happening politically to EDES: in Athens, it was divided between a rightwing and a leftwing element that were mutually incompatible; and in the mountains, it was becoming increasingly pro-monarchist and rightwing under Zervas, who had pledged himself as early as the spring of 1943 to work for the restoration of the King "even without the people's wishes,"¹⁰ and who had apparently accepted into his organization men of rightwing, even collaborationist, tendencies. Second, by this repudiation, Zervas acknowledged, to a limited but important extent, that the EAM/ELAS charges of collaboration had some basis in reality. EAM/ELAS had won a propaganda point.

The Plaka Armistice

The cease-fire territorial distribution called for under the second EAM/ELAS point was extremely advantageous to the Communists, but it was accepted in the Plaka Armistice,¹¹ signed on February 29, 1944, by EDES, EKKA, EAM/ELAS, and the AMM. This ended the interguerrilla war and gave official sanction to the very real fact that EAM/ELAS controlled most of the Greek mainland, while EDES, quartered in Epirus, was literally hemmed in along the western coast of Greece.

The third EAM/ELAS demand, concerning a united guerrilla army and a government of national unity, was beyond the scope of the AMM to discuss, and the Plaka Armistice contained no references to purely political matters. A secret clause, inserted at Woodhouse's behest, stated that EAM/ELAS, EDES, and EKKA would cooperate closely in plans (code named NOAH'S ARK) to harass the German withdrawal and would accept the infiltration into Greece of British and American units.

Communists Set Up Underground Government and Challenge Greek Government-in-Exile

Having failed at Plaka to produce any political arrangement, EAM/ELAS now unilaterally set up its own political organization to run the part of Greece which it controlled. The creation of the Political Committee for National Liberation (Politiki Epitropi Ethnikis Apeleftheroseos, or PEEA) was announced on March 26, 1944, and attracted a large number of highly respected non-Communist Greeks. It established itself at Viniiani, where the parish priest administered the oath of office to the leaders. Taking advantage of the groundswell of Greek nationalism, the Communists disassembled—abolishing the post of political adviser in ELAS, for example—and held elections in the mountains for a parliament. Prof. Alexandros Svolos, a man of integrity and distinction, was brought in to head PEEA.

Through these moves, EAM/ELAS undercut the position of the Greek government-in-exile, which was now clearly unrepresentative of political life inside Greece. Furthermore, mutinies in Greek army and navy units in the Middle East began in April 1944 and could not be put down by the exile government. Within Greece, EAM/ELAS destroyed EKKA, killing Colonel Psaros; and in so doing they gained clear political and military hegemony over mountain Greece, with the single exception of the area around Epirus, in western Greece, which continued to be controlled by the EDES guerrillas. From its position of strength, therefore, EAM/ELAS agreed to participate in a conference to be held in Lebanon in May to discuss a possible government of national unity, and it sent a seven-man delegation, including both Saraphis and Svolos, to meet with representatives of the government-in-exile.

EAM/ELAS Threat Is Parried

Although EAM/ELAS obviously felt that its prospects for dominating the new government of national unity were excellent, this opportunity never developed. The British and anti-Communist Greeks had quietly joined forces to bring together at the Grand Hotel du Bois de Boulogne, in a Lebanese village of the same name, a group of anti-EAM Greek politicians exfiltrated directly from the mainland. Headed by the new Prime Minister of the Greek government-in-exile, Georgios Papandhreu, these men closed ranks against the Svolos delegation. Shocked by the violent political attack upon them at the Lebanon meeting, the representatives of EAM/ELAS accepted virtually all of Prime Minister Papandhreu's eight-point political program, known as the Lebanon Charter.¹² EAM/ELAS promptly disavowed this action of the Svolos group and refused to join the new government; it demanded that Papandhreu resign. Svolos returned to Greece. With this failure of its political thrust, EAM/ELAS was ready to return to military means, and Saraphis was ordered to plan for the final destruction of EDES.

This threat, however, was dissipated during the summer of 1944 by a number of concurrent events and actions. Papandhreu refused to resign and proceeded to fill the cabinet positions

he had previously held open for EAM/ELAS. The British and Americans began to send small irregular units of Allied troops into Greece for interdiction operations against the Germans. Zervas, heavily supplied by the British, continued his harassing operations, begun that summer, against EAM/ELAS guerrillas. A Russian delegation which secretly arrived at ELAS headquarters on July 28 failed to send EAM/ELAS the supplies necessary for action against EDES. Meanwhile, the Germans began a series of heavy moving-up operations directed mainly against EAM/ELAS. And it may be that, in addition to all this, in the summer of 1944 EAM/ELAS "momentarily lost its nerve," as Colonel Woodhouse later suggested.¹³

In any case, the EAM/ELAS offensive against EDES was called off; PEEA and EAM/ELAS representatives joined the government of national unity on September 2; ELAS acted to improve its relations with the British; and finally, on September 26, Saraphis signed the Caserta Agreement.¹⁴ EAM/ELAS thereby accepted a British commander over its forces, as well as important limitations on its actions—guerrillas were not to attempt to seize power, they were not to enter the Athens area, and they were to cooperate with EDES in the coming liberation of Greece. Having lost, for the time being, both its political and military bids for power, EAM/ELAS apparently lived up to the Caserta Agreement when German troops began to pull out of Greece in the fall of 1944.

Guerrilla Operations Stress Attacks on Transportation System

The political events that preceded and followed the guerrillas' cooperation in harassing the German withdrawal have obscured their military achievements. It is just as well, therefore, to deal separately and directly with this subject. The Greek guerrillas during World War II, engrossed as they were with the form of the postwar Greek government, were neither particularly aggressive nor particularly effective; but they added a certain specific value to the overall military prosecution of the war.

The primary target for the guerrillas during the entire wartime period was the highly vulnerable transportation system. The guerrillas under both Aris and Zervas aided the British party in its attack on the Gorgopotamos bridge in November 1942 by engaging the Italian garrisons at either end of the bridge while the British demolition party did its work. Until September 1943, the guerrillas were fairly active, particularly in the Italian zone of occupation, in ambushing road parties, convoys, and trains and in demolishing culverts, bridges, and other road and rail installations. They reduced the Italian ability to move safely, and their attacks on small outlying garrisons often caused these to be withdrawn. EAM/ELAS, in particular, benefited from this withdrawal, assuming control of larger and larger sections of the country.

Operations ANIMALS and NOAH'S ARK

In June and July 1943, the Greek guerrillas cooperated in Operation ANIMALS by making a series of attacks on transportation targets and on small outlying troop garrisons. The primary

objective of ANIMALS was to make the Axis think that Greece rather than Sicily would be the target of the Allied invasion in July; and the British credited the Greek guerrillas with tying down at least one and possibly two German divisions that might otherwise have been diverted to Sicily.¹⁵ During ANIMALS, a six-man British party sabotaged the Asopos bridge, again interrupting the rail line for a number of weeks. Although EAM/ELAS refused to assist directly in this operation, their control of the area and their silence made it possible for the British party to perform the mission successfully.

After the Germans took control of the Italian-occupied areas in September 1943, guerrilla operations were confined to small-scale attacks and sabotage; most guerrilla operations in the following year were defensive in nature. Then in September 1944, the guerrillas put Operation NOAH'S ARK into full swing, centering their attention on roads and the north-south rail line. Despite their orderly withdrawal, the Germans were forced to fight their way north and were undoubtedly slowed up in their retreat from the country. In general, Greek guerrilla operations lacked aggressiveness but had definite nuisance value for the Allies.

Guerrilla Casualties

Even such operations as these were not accomplished without cost. EAM/ELAS claimed casualties of 4,500 killed and 6,000 wounded;¹⁶ one out of four ELAS guerrillas. EDES and EKKA, as well as other, minor guerrilla groups, suffered casualties, the precise numbers of which are unknown; many of their casualties were suffered during attacks initiated by EAM/ELAS.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

Despite the fact that there was a Greek puppet government in Athens, the occupation authorities carried the major counterinsurgency burden. At first this had fallen not so much on the Germans or Bulgarians as on the Italians, who had received the largest mainland zone of occupation. In general, Italian troops were no more effective against Greek irregulars than they had been somewhat earlier against Greek regulars. The various resistance movements were organized in Athens under Italian eyes. In 1942 and 1943, the insurgent leaders moved out of Athens and began recruiting guerrillas in the mountain villages, where the troops of the Italian Eleventh Army, under Gen. Carlo Vecchiarelli, moved indecisively. The Germans complained that even vital supply roads were allowed to remain under contest; for example, control of the Metsovon Highway, the only major east-west road in northern Greece, was intermittently lost. When Italian supply convoys were ambushed or outlying troops attacked, the Italian response was inconsistent: the troops sent to nearby villages sometimes only made inquiries but sometimes they burned houses and hanged villagers. Very rarely did Italian troops find or engage the

guerrillas. An experiment in setting up a semi-autonomous Vlach state in southwestern Macedonia, with armed legionaries to cope with the guerrillas, apparently never very effective, was abandoned in 1942.¹⁷ During this summer of increasing guerrilla operations, the Italians began to withdraw their outlying garrisons to the larger towns, leaving the mountain areas to become guerrilla ground.

Italians Withdraw From War, Leaving Germans With a Guerrilla Problem

By the fall of 1943, the Italian nation, defeated and despairing, had undergone an internal anti-Fascist coup, and the new non-Fascist Italian government of King Victor Emmanuel III and Marshal Pietro Badoglio signed an armistice with the Allied powers on September 3. This was announced five days later, on the eve of the Allied invasion of southern Italy. The Italian moves had not caught the Germans entirely by surprise. Operation ACHSE (AXIS) had been planned for the contingency of Italian defection, and German commanders in Italy* and elsewhere knew exactly what to do. In Greece, the German forces had been increased to five divisions, and a Bulgarian division was under direct German control. The Germans now demanded the immediate surrender of the Italian Eleventh Army, which in July had been placed under direct German theater control.

General Vecchiarelli, highly regarded by the Germans as a "good Prussian," surrendered immediately, but his Italian army of about 270,000 men did not behave in so disciplined a fashion. Some 120,000 Italians are estimated to have escaped from the Greek mainland or islands by one means or another. On a number of islands—for example, Cephalonia, Corfu, Rhodes,[†] and Samos—Italian forces fought German troops before being subdued. On the mainland, about 12,000 men from the Pinerolo Division and the Aosta Cavalry Brigade went over to the guerrillas. Furthermore, many of those Italian units who were surrendering to the Germans withdrew from their posts before the Germans arrived, giving the guerrillas a chance, quickly taken, to expand control over areas. Italian troops also forfeited stocks of weapons to the guerrillas, and many individual soldiers sold their weapons, adding to guerrilla strength. But by the end of September 1943, the Germans had obtained the surrender of the main strength of the Italian Eleventh Army.¹⁸

In taking over primary responsibility for the occupation of Greece, the Germans inherited an insurgency problem that had never been adequately coped with and which now had grown immeasurably more difficult. They estimated that, with the Italian defection, somewhat between two-thirds and four-fifths of Greek mainland territory was in guerrilla hands. The transportation system was subject to guerrilla harassment; the Metsovon Highway, in fact, was completely

* For a description of events within Italy, see Chapter Seven, "Italy (1943-1945)."

† The chief island in the Dodecanese group, Rhodes was taken over by Italy during the Italo-Turkish war of 1911-12. Ethnically Greek, it was ceded by Italy to Greece after the end of World War II.

closed and supplies were being detoured.¹⁹ The German response was, on the whole, orderly and fairly efficient. Almost simultaneously, they set about reorganizing the occupation; taking steps to improve their troop strength; and asserting area control, particularly over strategic areas and key points.

German Organization in Greece Is Complex and Overlapping

Organizationally, Greece fell under the aegis of the German Southeast Theater, which included all the occupied Balkan countries and was commanded by Field Marshal Maximilian von Weichs. German troops in Greece were under the command of Gen. Alexander Loehr, who, as head of Army Group E, was directly responsible for both the coastal defense of Greece and its internal security. Under Army Group E, the LXVIII Corps and the XXII Mountain Corps were assigned areas of tactical responsibility—the former for eastern Greece and Peloponnesus, the latter for the Epirus region of southern Albania and western Greece to the Gulf of Patras. These two corps, with a combined total of three divisions regularly assigned, were the mainstay of General Loehr's tactical strength, although other commands under Army Group E obtained corps status by the beginning of 1944. These were Fortress Crete; the Salonika-Aegean Administrative Area, with headquarters in Salonika; and a Bulgarian corps, operating in Thrace and Eastern Macedonia, which would come under Loehr in the event of an Allied invasion attempt. Because of certain complexities in the administrative organization of Greece, however, General Loehr did not have an entirely clear field. In addition to Army Group E, the Germans had at least two separate military commands in Greece.

One was Military Command Greece, situated in Athens and headed by Lt. Gen. Wilhelm Speidel, who reported, not to von Weichs, but to the Military Commander Southeast, whose main and consuming responsibility for combat against Yugoslav guerrillas in Serbia precluded his paying very much attention to problems in Greece. General Speidel was supposed to have executive power and territorial authority to administer Greece, while General Loehr had strategic and tactical military control. As Loehr saw his role, the guerrilla warfare in Greece made certain economic, financial, and administrative requirements tactically necessary. As Speidel viewed the situation, such tactical requirements paralyzed his organization and infringed on his command. "It was unavoidable," he later wrote, "that these two so widely differing conceptions should lead to severe controversies."²⁰

Another source of organizational difficulty was the role of the Senior SS and Police Leader for Greece, a post created in September 1943. SS Gen. Walter Schimana, who occupied this position, was nominally responsible to General Speidel; in fact, he had sole responsibility for police matters and did not report on these to Speidel, but, rather, directly to Reich Leader SS Heinrich Himmler in Germany. General Schimana was also responsible for antiguerrilla warfare in certain combat areas.²¹ Thus Schimana's role overlapped and impinged upon those of both

General Spetdel and General Loehr, while Sehtmann himself was in a position to bypass both of these commanders.

In addition to the military leaders, one other person figured importantly in the German occupation of Greece. The Special Plenipotentiary, Ambassador Hermann Neubacher, represented German political and economic interests in the Balkans and in this role was directly involved in the antiguerrilla combat in Greece. He was far more concerned, for example, with the long-range consequences of the growth of communism in Greece than with the tactical requirements of Army Group E. The complexity of the German organization in Greece and the interplay between individual commanders—which reflected the labyrinthine infrastructure of the Nazi administration within Germany—resulted in a certain inconsistency in the direction of counterinsurgent operations in Greece.

Axis Problems Concerning Troop Strength, Readiness, and Morale

Not only did the Germans have internal organizational problems in Greece, but they faced severe difficulties in procuring sufficient troops to manage the occupation. By the fall of 1943, the German attack on the U. S. S. R. had turned into a debacle, and the eastern front was literally devouring German divisions. As a result, the numbers of troops available for the Southeastern theater were severely limited. It is estimated that the Germans at this time had 14 divisions and about 600,000 men with which to occupy the entire Balkan area, including Yugoslavia, where guerrilla warfare was competing in its intensity and casualties with the front lines. By the end of 1943 the German commitment in the Balkans had risen to 20 divisions and about 700,000 men; but of these only 5 divisions and an estimated total of 140,000 men were assigned to Greece, and by mid-1944 this strength was to drop to about 100,000 men.

Furthermore, few of the German divisions in Greece were composed of first-class troops. Having only a few combat-ready units such as the 1st Mountain Division, the Germans were forced to depend largely on an assortment of over-age, postconvalescent units, "fortress" regiments composed of former general military prisoners, and certain "Eastern" regiments composed of U. S. S. R. citizens of Tatar derivation willing to fight on the German side. Some of the last had to be disarmed in 1944.

Bulgarian troops—estimated at 40,000 in strength—were, with the exception of one division, generally under their own tactical command. Although the Bulgarians were regarded by the Germans as good soldiers and effective in antiguerrilla operations, they had their own ideas about running the war in Greece and therefore presented difficulties. They tended to stay in German-occupied territory after tactical missions were completed, they did not want to turn over weapons or booty captured from Greek guerrillas, they diverted troops from coastal defense to internal security, and they were disenchanted by German defeats. By mid-1944 some Bulgarians serving in German units also had to be disarmed.

Unfortunately for the Germans, the Italians--that vast reservoir of potential troop strength--proved a disappointing source of manpower. Of the thousands and thousands of Italian troops who surrendered to the Germans in the fall of 1943, some went into prisoner-of-war camps, some joined noncombat labor battalions, and some took on armed guard and security duty. But few chose to fight on the side of the Germans, and those few proved generally undependable from the German viewpoint. When asked to take an oath of allegiance to the Axis, about 30 percent of the Italians refused. The Germans dispersed the Italians throughout their own units at the ratio of one company of 40 Italians per German security battalion, but Italian disaffection increased throughout the war. The Germans could never place complete reliance on the Italian troops serving in German ranks.²²

Greek Security Battalions

The most effective measure the Germans took to improve their troops strength was to encourage the puppet Rallis government to continue the plan initiated in the summer of 1943 of recruiting Greek security battalions to fight the guerrillas. Total enrollment in these battalions has been variously estimated at between 5,000 and 15,000 men. Recruitment for the security battalions often succeeded among those who had been in guerrilla units eliminated by EAM/ELAS or who feared the growth of a Communist guerrilla group or who were faced with the problem of survival. Most of the men in the security battalions apparently came from among the conservative and anti-Communist peasants of the south, particularly those in the Peloponnesus.

Nominally commanded by Greek officers, each unit in the battalions had a German liaison officer who was often the actual commander. Because the Greek security battalions were experienced, were knowledgeable about the terrain and the guerrilla enemy, and fought without expectation or grant of quarter, they were extremely effective in antiguerrilla operations. They must be viewed as an important German success in the counterinsurgency fight.

Urban Security Measures

German strategy, taking into account the severe limitations on resources, was not predicated upon controlling all the Greek countryside. Troop shortages dictated a plan of antiguerrilla defense limited to securing from attack those areas needed for military purposes--mainly the transportation network and those towns and villages located along it.

To maintain urban security, the army post or station commander took ordinary precautions--for example, closing all except certain roads leading from the town and establishing traffic checkpoints on these. If the threat was great and the population hostile, he sometimes had trenches, obstacles, observation posts, and combat installations built at vulnerable points. Guerrillas and even Allied liaison officers were often able to breach these defenses, coming into and leaving the towns; but the presence of German troops was generally sufficient to

preclude guerrilla attacks within the towns. What the Germans termed "outer security" was thus never complete, but it sufficed.

"Inner security"—the protection of important areas or installations within the towns—was more stringent; and again, while it was impossible to avoid all sabotage, the situation was generally supportable. Since the Germans were forced to use Greek manpower for many jobs, however, they could not prevent intelligence leaks, and this was a continuous problem. Furthermore, the practice of billeting troops in private homes led to close relations with the population and security leaks. The Germans complained bitterly that their every step was immediately known to the guerrillas. Defensive counterintelligence was always a problem for the Germans.

Defense of Roads and Railways

The Greek roads and railways, often stretching through mountains, traversing bridges, and overlooked by high bluffs, were extremely vulnerable to guerrilla attack. Since there were almost no alternative roads or rail lines, protection of the existing network was vital. The Germans used a number of methods. Road traffic was generally handled in convoys and sent out on irregular schedules, and the positions of defense vehicles were changed frequently so as to avoid setting a pattern for attack. In addition, barrier zones were set up, and fortifications erected on each side of important bridges or tunnels. Strong points were built along the roads and manned by troops who patrolled the intervening areas. However, since blockhouses were built at intervals of six miles and were sometimes manned by as few as eight men, the system was quite vulnerable.

To improve road security, roving motorized road-control detachments were used to supplement the foot patrols; they checked civilians using the road, tested combat readiness of the strong points, and came to the assistance of any group under attack. These detachments, operating at platoon strength, mounted on armored vehicles, and armed with machineguns, 20-mm. antiaircraft artillery, and searchlights, were effective against both air and guerrilla attacks. Their use was limited, however, by vehicle and fuel shortages. Air patrols were generally unavailable, again owing to aircraft and fuel shortages.

Rail lines were defended in much the same way. The area on either side of the track was restricted and unauthorized personnel in the zone—three miles wide in rural areas—would be shot on sight. Station houses were fortified and other strong points were established. Armored cars patrolled the roads and accompanied trains. Furthermore, Greek personnel running the trains were a form of hostage against guerrilla attack; when their presence proved insufficient as a deterrent, Greek civilians were rounded up and carried as hostages in cages pushed ahead of the locomotives.

German Antiguerilla Tactics

Combat operations against the guerrillas were characterized by the Germans as either major or minor. Minor operations occurred when contact with guerrillas was made inadvertently or in response to guerrilla attacks; they were carried out by troop units below divisional level; and, although sometimes planned, they were usually impromptu in nature. Small-scale tactics usually consisted of forming a pocket and combing the area; but since the Germans lacked secrecy, surprise, and sufficient troops to make an adequate encirclement, their attempts often degenerated into punitive expeditions, which they did not regard as particularly effective.

Major operations, on the other hand, were, from the German viewpoint, more successful. These were undertaken against strong, entrenched forces and only on the basis of adequate information concerning the guerrillas' hideouts and habits. Information was obtained through ground and air reconnaissance, monitoring of guerrilla radio and telephone communications, study of captured documents, and the interrogation of prisoners. The use of spies was also attempted, but the number caught by the guerrillas appears to indicate that, in general, these were not particularly effective. Even after active operations had started, intelligence collection was continued; the value of air reconnaissance was clearly demonstrated; and the monitoring of guerrilla communications, which were often given in the clear during operations, was limited only by the availability of interpreters.

Major operations were minutely planned by one or two officers, and extraordinary attention was paid to the maintenance of secrecy and security. Only after the plan was complete were division commanders briefed and rehearsed in a map exercise; they then briefed regimental and independent unit commanders, but no others. Indeed, attempts were often made to deceive German troops, so that leaks in security might misinform guerrilla intelligence.

Major Operations Emphasize Encirclement

The purpose of major operations was not to take terrain, but to destroy guerrillas. The almost universal tactic planned for a large operation was to make a large encirclement, then to compress the ring and push the guerrillas inward, and finally to come to grips with and destroy the guerrillas in battle. To compensate for their lack of trained, combat-ready troops, the Germans used second-class troops for stationary blocking operations and first-class troops for assault echelons. When possible, these were followed by reserves, so that local guerrilla breakthroughs could be intercepted. The Germans also tried to cover possible escape routes by echeloning machinegun positions in depth. To counteract guerrilla attempts to remain hidden as troops passed by, German commanders also inaugurated the practice of having a second line to comb territory already passed by forward units. They also learned that, even after the final battle had been fought and the guerrillas had surrendered, it paid to comb the area of encirclement still again; by so doing, they flushed out surprisingly large numbers of hiding guerrillas.

One of the most interesting of the German discoveries²⁴ about tactics concerned the matter of timing. While it was extremely important to reach and close the outer encirclement line quickly, the Germans learned that, from this point on, they should take whatever time was needed to ensure a slow, steady compression, avoiding gaps in the line and troop fatigue. The important thing was to keep the guerrillas within the ring and to destroy them methodically.

Results of German Anti-guerrilla Operations

The Germans inflicted heavy losses on the guerrillas in these operations. ²⁴ In Operation PANTHER, undertaken in late 1943 to clear major transportation routes, the Germans used more than two divisions against EAM/ELAS and EDES and claimed 1,400 guerrilla casualties. In early 1944, German and Bulgarian troops made a number of sweeps in northeastern Greece which, according to German records, were highly profitable. In Operation WOLF, the Germans inflicted guerrilla casualties of 254 dead and 400 captured; in Operation HORRIDO, guerrilla casualties were 310 dead and 15 captured, compared with German losses of only 18 dead, wounded, and missing (a ratio of 18 to 1); and in Operation RENNTIER, the Germans and Bulgarians killed 96 and captured 100 guerrillas, while suffering only 9 casualties (a ratio of almost 22 to 1). Operation ILTIS, however, resulted in a mere 15 guerrilla casualties.

In 1944 the Germans concentrated against the forces of EAM/ELAS. In Operation MAIGEWITTER, undertaken in the spring of 1944 against ELAS forces in northern Greece, the Germans claimed to have killed 339 guerrillas and to have captured 75 guerrillas and 200 suspects. MAIGEWITTER was followed in June by Operation GEMSBOCK, which employed three German divisions against 9,000 ELAS and other Communist forces on the Greek-Albanian border. Guerrilla losses, again according to German records, amounted to 2,500 killed or captured, with German losses of 120 killed and 300 wounded—the ratio dropping in this instance to 6 to 1. It should also be noted that, despite fairly high casualties, the guerrillas successfully extricated about 72 percent of their forces.

GEMSBOCK was followed by Operation STEINADLER. Using about 18,000 troops, the Germans moved against ELAS forces estimated at 6,000 to 8,000 in north-central Greece. Savage fighting, including the guerrillas' murder and mutilation of 80 wounded in a German battalion aid station which they overran, finally resulted in the killing of 567 guerrillas and the German capture of 976 guerrillas, 341 Italians, and 7 British officers. Despite these heavy losses, the German commander noted that strong guerrilla groups reappeared in the same area a few weeks later—corroboration of the fact that ELAS had extricated somewhere between 75 and 81 percent of its guerrillas.

Operation KREUZOTTER was planned as a three-phase attack: the first two were to be launched against ELAS forces in southwestern Greece and Boeotia, the third against EDES. ELAS losses from this August 1944 operation amounted to 298 killed and 280 captured, while the

Germans lost 30 killed, 112 captured, and 1 missing—a ratio of about 4 to 1. The third phase of KREUZOTTER was apparently canceled by the pressure of events in late summer 1944; although there may have been local action, there is no available German record of large-scale operations against EDES at this time.

The casualty figures derived from these German operations demonstrate the efficiency of planned military operations against guerrillas, but they beloud a major point. Although German military operations succeeded in inflicting heavy casualties on the guerrillas, in disrupting guerrilla organization, and in re-establishing German control over specific points, they did not succeed in eliminating the guerrillas, whose strength, if not military efficiency, was increasing. In retrospect, this is not too surprising, since the Germans lacked both sufficient troops to hold the ground they gained in operations and the popular support necessary to attempt to destroy the guerrillas outright. Although tactically they sought to destroy the guerrilla bands, the Germans were realistic enough to know that, strategically, they could not eliminate the guerrillas in the country as a whole.

German Attempts To Control the Population by Reprisals

Whatever expectation of Greek support the Germans might have had in 1941, the Greeks had learned by the end of 1943 to distrust and fear the Germans. On the other hand, German tactical commanders in Greece blamed the Greek population for the existence and growth of the guerrilla bands. Desiring to separate the guerrillas from the population but lacking the resources for mass resettlement, German commanders felt that the way to control the population was to show extreme "firmness": every act against the occupier would bring reprisals, and local inhabitants would be held responsible for what occurred in their area. The Germans could not have failed to realize that the populace could not actually stop any specific guerrilla operation or that the people were in no position to refuse food or shelter to armed guerrillas who arrived at the door. Apparently the policy of the Germans was to make themselves even more feared than the guerrillas—so feared that Greeks would be alienated from and betray the guerrillas in order to end this double menace to their own existence.

Although reprisals had been taken against the population before the fall of 1943, the ratio had been generally at 10-to-1, low in comparison with the 50-to-1 and 100-to-1 ratios imposed in the Slavic countries. After the German takeover that fall, however, reprisals became more severe, reaching 30 to 1 and even 50 to 1. Sometimes the victims were selected from among persons already imprisoned and marked for death—Jews and known Communists, for example; sometimes they were hostages previously taken to prevent guerrilla attacks; sometimes they were simply persons taken off the street at random after an attack had occurred.

Occasionally minor operations initiated in response to guerrilla attack ended in widespread reprisals. A mopping-up operation begun in December 1943 in the Peloponnesus, in retaliation

for an ELAS killing of 78 captured German soldiers the previous day near Kalavrita, resulted in few if any guerrilla casualties—but 24 villages and 3 monasteries were destroyed and 696 Greek men were shot.²⁵ Although Ambassador Neubacher denounced the reprisals at theater level, little change was actually made in the policy, as indicated by the following order, made by the German theater commander on December 22, 1943. "If such people as are guilty cannot be found, those persons must be resorted to who, without being connected with the actual deed, nevertheless are to be regarded as coresponsible."²⁶

In April 1944, a similar incident occurred at Klisoura in Macedonia. Here troops of the 7th SS Panzer Grenadier Regiment, including Bulgarian elements, surrounded the village after two German motorcyclists had been killed about a mile and a half away. The able-bodied men had already fled, and the troops therefore rounded up the aged, the women, and the children, including nine less than one year old. All 223 of these were shot to death, and the village was burned. This incident, remarkable for its savagery, elicited a violent protest from Neubacher, who called it the "blood bath" of Klisoura.²⁷ Nevertheless such incidents recurred—in June, 270 inhabitants were shot in Dhistomon. A German secret field police observer noted, however, that none were "beaten to death by rifle butt or [killed] by pouring gasoline over them and setting them on fire,"²⁸ as presumably had occurred elsewhere. The Dhistomon reprisal was illegal even by German standards, since it had been initiated, not by a divisional commander, but by a company commander. His regimental commander recommended leniency for him, however, since the action "corresponded to a natural soldierly feeling" and had obviated the need to send later "a strong mission with corresponding high fuel consumption."²⁹ Greek government sources were to estimate later that by the end of the occupation 1,770 Greek villages lay in ashes.

Ambassador Neubacher perceived quite clearly the results of such irresponsible and irrational terrorization. Selection of victims at random meant that pro-German Greeks ran the same risk as anti-Germans, so that there was no value in being either collaborationist or neutral. The reprisals, directed as they were against the aged, the women, and the children, left men homeless and gave them reason to hate the Germans; they drove men to the guerrillas, not away from them. And as Neubacher noted, "The political effect . . . by far exceeds the effect of all propaganda efforts in our fight against communism."³⁰ As the most widespread, articulate, and active guerrilla organization, EAM/ELAS was the undoubted beneficiary of German methods. This was soon to be proved.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

On September 10, 1944, the guerrillas began Operation NOAH'S ARK, designed to harass the final German withdrawal from Greece. By the end of September, the German position in Greece

was untenable--not as a result of NOAH'S ARK but because of their overall military situation. By early October, German troops were out of the Peloponnese; on October 12, they left Athens; by October 30, they had pulled out of Salonika; and by early November, they had left the Greek mainland entirely--in orderly fashion despite the harassment. The Bulgarian withdrawal, complete on October 25, was followed by the signing of an armistice on the 28th. The Allied Military Mission to the Greek guerrillas ceased to exist as such, although the liaison officers were often retained to effect demobilization of their guerrilla units.

Meanwhile, in late September, British forces under Lt. Gen. Ronald Scobie had begun to enter the south of Greece for Operation MANNA, counterpart to NOAH'S ARK and frankly designed to keep the Communists in EAM/ELAS from prematurely seizing power before the government-in-exile could return and consolidate its position within Greece.³¹ The Papandhreu government returned to Athens on October 18, while EAM/ELAS installed itself at Lamia in central Greece. The question of postwar control of Greece had not been settled, but the period of Axis counterinsurgency was ended.

Costs of the Guerrilla War and the Occupation to the Greeks and Allies

The German occupation and antiguerrilla warfare had indeed been costly for the Greeks. Not only were there more than 10,000 guerrilla casualties, but an estimated 70,000 civilians were the victims of Axis reprisals. Greek transportation facilities had been wrecked, partly as a result of guerrilla operations, partly because of Allied bombing in 1944: of 1,700 miles of railways, only 415 miles were left in a usable state. Occupation policies had imposed a further cost on the Greek economy: Greek villages had been razed and a large segment of the population left wandering and homeless, and probably no other country had suffered so much from the effects of raging inflation.

In comparison with these Greek costs, those for the Allies had been small indeed. It is estimated that fewer than 400 Allied troops were involved in Greek guerrilla operations; air-dropped supplies amounted to only 2,514 tons; seaborne supplies were undoubtedly modest; and the support cost, in terms of gold sovereigns, has been estimated at several million dollars--a total small in comparison with other wartime operations.

Costs and Achievements of German Counterinsurgency

German counterinsurgency had limited the achievements of the Allied-supported Greek guerrilla movement. At the most, only three German soldiers had been tied down by each guerrilla; and during many months, the tiedown ratio had been even lower. Furthermore, German casualties were estimated, on the basis of extremely rough guesses, at only 5,000 to 15,000 men, with probability strongly favoring the smaller figure. On the other hand, one or two German divisions had been kept in Greece in the summer of 1943 when they could have been profitably

used in Sicily—an important factor. German communications had been intermittently disrupted, particularly by the attacks on major bridge installations. It might be said that, although the German war effort was not critically affected by the Greek guerrillas, it had been harassed, its sharpness somewhat blunted, and its psychological self-image deflected. Germans had to admit that, if they were feared, they were also hated; even worse, the growth of the Greek guerrilla movement implied Greek belief in eventual German defeat. In this sense, the mere existence of the guerrillas offered a psychological rebuttal to the Germans.

It has been stated that, in the end, the Germans were able to turn the guerrilla movement against the Allies. Colonel Woodhouse has claimed ³² that the Germans, recognizing the intense incompatibility of the Communist aims of EAM/ELAS and those of the British, turned the situation to their own advantage by leaving stocks of arms for EAM/ELAS to find. This has been denied by the German corps commander. But whether the events of late 1944 occurred by accident or design, British troops were to fight EAM/ELAS guerrillas, and this circumstance certainly played into Axis hands.

EAM/ELAS Bids for Political Power

As German counterinsurgency against the Greek guerrillas came to an end in the fall of 1944, EAM/ELAS, although in control of the Greek countryside, had not succeeded in achieving its larger objective, domination of the postwar government. Furthermore, with strong British support, the newly returned government was pressing to demobilize the guerrillas and to create a new Greek army. Thus the Greek Communists saw their ELAS army, so carefully tended and saved, in danger of being dismantled.

With time running out, EAM/ELAS tried to delay demobilization of its forces. When this was unavailing, it prepared to move politically to bring down the Papandhreu government; and it took certain military steps—bringing troops closer to Athens, calling up its Athenian reserves, and arranging for a demonstration in the streets, for example—to demonstrate its power and its popularity. Apparently it hoped, by this show of force, to bring about a new government in which its voice would be the most powerful.

The "December War" Sets British and Greeks Against EAM/ELAS

The plan backfired because the street demonstration led to bloodshed, and when the Communists undertook further military steps, they were met by Greek government and British resistance. The "December War"³³ that followed saw the British bring into Greece troop reinforcements of two divisions from the still active Italian theater.

In the countryside, EAM/ELAS units disposed of Zervas' guerrillas in Epirus and of other independent bands in Macedonia; but in Athens they were isolated, since British aircraft patrolled the roads and prevented the arrival of trained reinforcements, and the Athenian ELAS

reserves proved to be untrained and untested. Military pressure finally forced EAM/ELAS out of Athens.

In this period EAM/ELAS lost even more than the military battle: after December, most Greeks could neither view it as an organization with noble and patriotic aims, nor ignore any longer the fact that it was Communist dominated. Taking on its retreat from Athens a number of civilian hostages, many of whom suffered severely and died in the cold, and leaving behind the unpleasant evidence of the retribution it had exacted in people's tribunals, EAM/ELAS lost its patriotic image. Also, the British, insisting that they would deal only with the real leadership of EAM/ELAS, forced Georgos Siantos, acting secretary-general of the KKE, into the foreground, thus discrediting the claim that EAM was a united front of many parties. Reorganization of the Greek government along coalition lines gave many previously pro-EAM Greeks a place of return, and they withdrew from EAM.³⁴ By early January, EAM/ELAS was out of Athens and suing for an armistice. The Anglo-EAM "war" came to an end on January 15, 1945.

By the terms of the Varkiza Agreement³⁵ of February 12, 1945, EAM/ELAS agreed to immediate demobilization and disarmament of its forces. In turn, the government agreed to maintain civil liberties, give amnesty for certain political crimes, purge collaborators, and hold a national plebiscite on the question of the monarchy. Among Greeks, the political pendulum moved to the right: the days of the "national front" were over and communism was certainly discredited, at least for the time being. Unfortunately, no national political consensus was reached, and dark days still loomed as the Greeks faced the intense problems of civilian distress, ruinous inflation, economic dislocation, governmental instability, and political immoderation. Worst of all, an even more dangerous period of insurgency* was yet to come.

In Retrospect

Two important strategic lessons† appear to emerge from the insurgency-counterinsurgency experience in wartime Greece, particularly with regard to the later postwar usage of insurgency as a Communist weapon. First, it demonstrated the difficulties an external sponsor has in maintaining control over an insurgent movement. This problem may also plague those Communist countries trying to exploit "wars of national liberation." One may ask, therefore, whether this possibility is given due consideration by the counterinsurgents of the West.

The second lesson concerns the German strategic concept. The German counterinsurgents accepted a limited strategic aim with regard to the Greek guerrillas, realizing that containment was sufficient for their purpose, at least until resolution of other problems could free them to raise the strategic objective. They failed in their aim because they lost the war, and this failure tends to obscure the inherent validity of their concept. Extrapolating from the Greek experience

* See Chapter Seventeen, "Greece (1946-1949)."†

† For tactical lessons, see "Counterinsurgency" section.

to the present and future, one may ask whether simple denial of victory to Communist insurgents in a given area should not be viewed as a valid strategic counterinsurgent goal, at least until the resolution of other problem allows the strategic objective to be raised.

NOTES

Author's Note: This paper is based primarily on the research that was accomplished for and documented within the author's Case Study in Guerrilla War: Greece During World War II ([Washington]: Special Operations Research Office, 1961). Specific footnotes are included in the text of this paper mainly to give credit for quotations or opinions cited therein. The bibliography following these notes should give additional insights into the entire field of insurgency and counterinsurgency in wartime Greece.

¹See EAM aims as stated in 1942 by the Communist Demetrios Glenos in the EAM-published pamphlet, What is EAM and What Does It Want?

²C[hristopher] M[ontague] Woodhouse, Apple of Discord: A Survey of Recent Greek Politics in Their International Setting (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1948), pp. 32-33, 61-64; L. S. Stavrianos, "Greece: The War and Aftermath," Foreign Policy Reports, 21, 12 (September 1, 1948), 176; L. S. Stavrianos, Greece: American Dilemma and Opportunity (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1952), pp. 69-72.

³Denys Hamson, We Fell Among Greeks (London: Jonathan Cape [1946]), p. 98.

⁴Of the twelve, at least three later published books based on their experience—E. C. W. Myers, C. M. Woodhouse, and Denys Hamson. (See bibliography for references.)

⁵Maj. Gerald K. Wines later (around 1948) wrote an unpublished manuscript on his years behind German lines, "A Lesson In Greek." This he was kind enough to lend the author. Its foreword is by Colonel Woodhouse, who paid a very touching personal tribute to his American second in command.

⁶U.S. Air Force, Historical Division, Europe: Argument to V-E Day, January 1944 to May 1945 (The Army Air Forces in World War II, eds. W. F. Craven and J. L. Cate. Vol. 3; Chicago: The University of Chicago Press [1951]), chapter 14.

⁷See the memoirs of Saraphis, published as Greek Resistance Army: The Story of ELAS, tr. and abr. by Marion Pascoe (London: Birch Books, 1951).

⁸Woodhouse, Apple of Discord, pp. 64-65.

⁹For the British point of view concerning the Cairo crisis in the summer of 1943, see the various accounts by E. C. W. Myers, Greek Entanglement (London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1955); Woodhouse, Apple of Discord; Henry Maitland Wilson, Eight Years Overseas (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1948); Reginald Leeper, When Greek Meets Greek (London: Chatto and Windus, 1950); and Winston Churchill, Closing the Ring (The Second World War) (Vol. V; Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1951), pp. 532-56. For a royalist view, see Arthur I. Gould Lee, The Royal House of Greece (London and Melbourne: Ward Lock, [1948]).

¹⁰Zervas, quoted in Woodhouse, Apple of Discord, p. 74.

¹¹Reprinted in Condit, Case Study, App. D, pp. 275-76.

¹²See Woodhouse, Apple of Discord, p. 305, for a summary reprint of Papandhreu's eight points; see also Leeper, When Greek Meets Greek, pp. 50-53.

¹³ Woodhouse, Apple of Discord, p. 194.

¹⁴ For terms of the Caserta Agreement, see Condit, Case Study, App. F, pp. 279-80.

¹⁵ Churchill, Closing the Ring, p. 535; Myers, Greek Entanglement, pp. 204-205.

¹⁶ Saraphis, Greek Resistance Army, p. 278.

¹⁷ Woodhouse, Apple of Discord, p. 94.

¹⁸ United States Department of the Army, Office of the Chief of Military History, "Operation ACHSE, A Documented Narrative" (unpublished ms. R-2; Office of the Chief of Military History); and "Work Notes for Dissolution of the Italian Army in the Balkans, Sep. -Dec. 43" (unpublished ms. R-1; Office of the Chief of Military History).

¹⁹ General der Gebirgstruppen Hubert Lanz, "Partisan Warfare in the Balkans," tr. Franke and Luetzkendorf (unpublished ms. P-055a; Koenigstein: EUCOM Historical Div., 1950), pp. 15, 41-55, 67-68, 80; General der Flieger Wilhelm Speidel, "Report on Greece (1942-1944): My Mission in Greece," tr. H. Heitmann (unpublished ms. P-003; U. S. Army, Europe, 1948), p. 31.

²⁰ Speidel, "Report on Greece," p. 36.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 32, 42-44, 59; Chief Oberkommando Wehrmacht (OKW) order of 7 Sep. 43, subj.: Directive for the Higher SS and Police Leader in Greece, tr. and quoted in U.S. Military Tribunal, Trials of War Criminals Before the Nuernberg Military Tribunals, Under Control Council Law No. 10. Nuernberg, October 1946-April 1949 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1950), Vol. XI, 929-30.

²² Chief OKW, order of 15 Sep. 43, subj.: Basic policy concerning the treatment of soldiers of the Italian armed forces and of the militia, tr. and extracted in Trials of War Criminals, XI, 1081-83, and 822-24. See also [Robert M. Kennedy], German Antiguerrilla Operations in the Balkans (1941-1944) (Department of the Army Pam. 20-243; Washington: Department of the Army, 1954), pp. 49-50, 54, 59.

²³ For a discussion based on firsthand experience by a tactical commander engaged in extensive counterinsurgency operations, see "Partisan Warfare in the Balkans" by General Lanz, commander of the German XXII Mountain Corps; see also LXVIII Army Corps, War Diary No. 3, 1 July-31 December 1943, tr. and extracted in Trials of War Criminals, XI, 1030-32.

²⁴ For casualty figures, see Lanz, "Partisan Warfare in the Balkans," and [Kennedy], German Antiguerrilla Operations.

²⁵ LXVIII Army Corps, War Diary No. 3, in Trials of War Criminals, XI, 1030-32.

²⁶ Excerpts from this order are translated in Trials of War Criminals, XI, 826-27, 1306-1307.

²⁷ Hermann Neubacher, report dated 15 May 1944, subj.: "The Blood Bath of Klissura," tr. and extracted in Trials of War Criminals, XI, 1034-36.

²⁸ Quoted in Trials of War Criminals, XI, 832.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 833.

³⁰ Ibid., p. 1036.

³¹ John Ehrman, Grand Strategy (Vol. VI, October 1944-August 1945, of History of the Second World War, ed. J. R. M. Butler; London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956), pp. 45, 61.

³² C. M. Woodhouse, "The Greek Resistance, 1942-44," in European Resistance Movements 1939-1945 (New York: Pergamon Press, 1960), p. 389.

³³ For the period of the December War, see William Hardy McNeill, The Greek Dilemma: War and Aftermath (New York: J. B. Lippincott, [1947]).

³⁴ Great Britain, Foreign Office, Documents Regarding the Situation in Greece, January 1945 (Greece No. 1 [1945], Cmd. No. 6592; London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1945). This collection of documents includes nine concerning ELAS brutality to hostages in November-December 1944 (Pt. I), and the EDES charter plus four disclaimers of ELAS policy made in December 1944 by various political parties (Pt. II).

³⁵ For text of the Varkiza Agreement, see Woodhouse, Apple of Discord, pp. 308-310.

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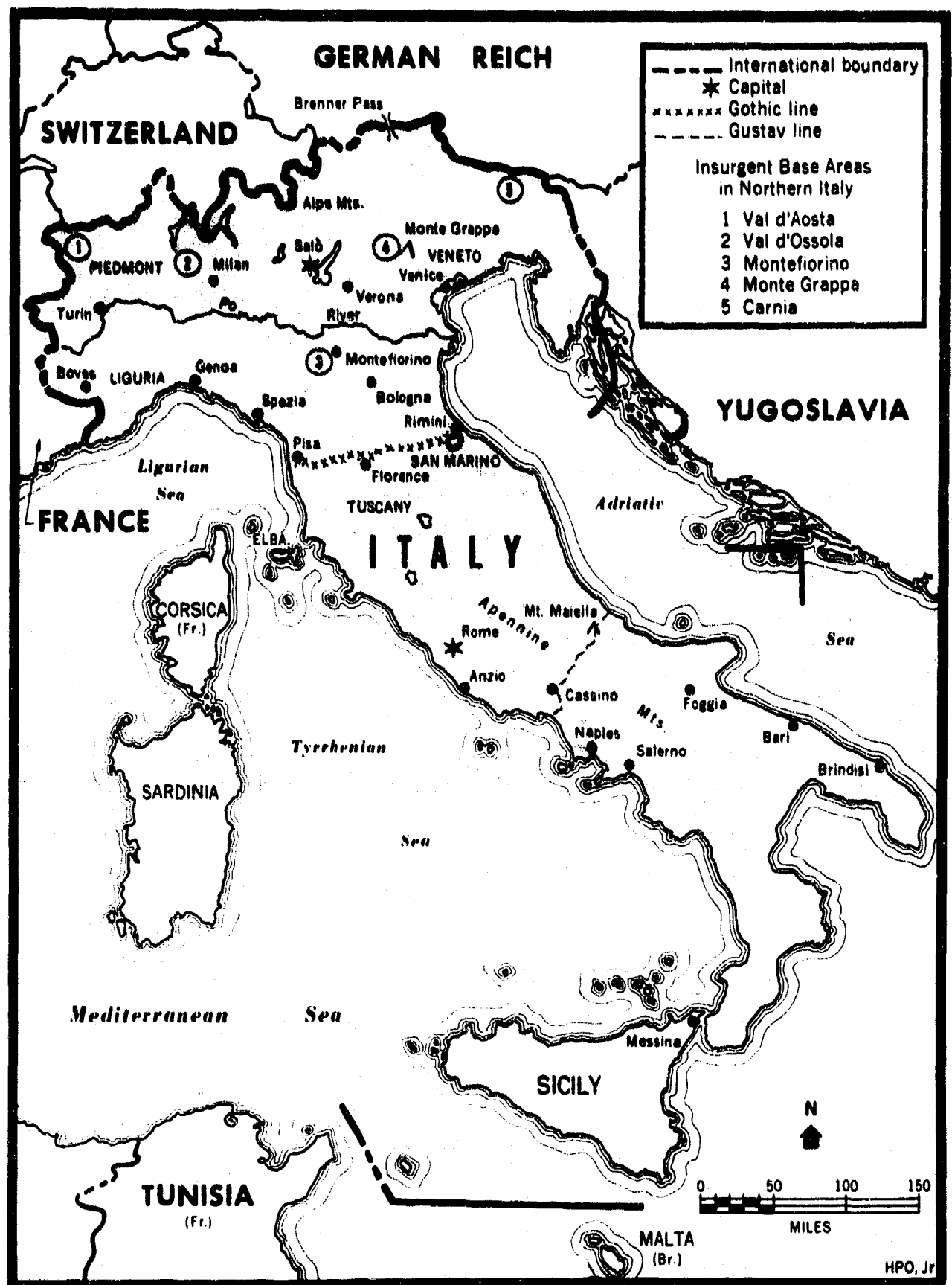
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Chapter Seven

**ITALY
1943-1945**

by Massimo Salvadori



Chapter Seven

ITALY (1943-1945)

by Massimo Salvadori

After September 1943, German forces in Italy and Mussolini's puppet regime fought not only invading Allied armies, but an internal anti-Fascist insurgency, supported by the Allies, which continuously regenerated itself despite the temporary tactical victories of counterinsurgent operations.

BACKGROUND

The anti-Fascist insurgency that sprang up in Italy during the last part of World War II has been termed a "second risorgimento," in reference to the Italian nationalist movement of the 19th century and the groundswell of popular approval that accompanied it. The wartime resistance was the culmination and outward manifestation of a long period of clandestine activity by Italians who opposed fascism. Therefore, a short review of the Italian situation is in order if one is to understand the remarkable events of 1943-45.

About as large as New England and New York State combined, Italy is composed of a continental part situated between France and Yugoslavia; a long narrow peninsula jutting into the Mediterranean; two large islands, Sicily and Sardinia, lying southwest and west of the peninsula; and a number of smaller islands. Traditionally, Italy is divided into three major sections—northern, central, and southern. Each section, in turn, contains a number of regions which, with one or two exceptions, correspond to geographically distinct territories, each with its own local history and culture.

Northern continental Italy makes up about two-fifths of the whole country, composed mainly of a large, fertile, well-irrigated plain, sloping eastward toward the Adriatic Sea. Rich in rivers, continental Italy is encircled on the west, north, and part of the east by the massive towering Alpine range; in the south, it is dominated by the lower and largely barren Apennines. The Apennines form the backbone of the peninsula, otherwise a region of small coastal plains and numerous rivers which may be swollen in winter and spring, but become trickles during the hot months. Sicily, slightly larger than Vermont, and Sardinia, slightly smaller than New Hampshire, are mountainous and dry. Italy lies entirely within the temperate zone: summers tend to be hot and dry, winters cold and wet, especially in the north.

Italy's People and Social Patterns

At the outbreak of World War II, Italy's population was about 45 million, with the highest density (about 2,000 inhabitants per square mile) in the northern plain, in a few coastal plains of the peninsula, and in Sicily; population densities were low in the mountainous areas and in Sardinia. About one-fourth of the population lived in the countryside; the rest in a few large cities, hundreds of smaller ones, and thousands of villages. Except for about a million people who were members of ethnic minorities (Slavs in the northeast, Germans in the north, French in the northwest, Albanians and Greeks in the south), Italians formed a single national unit, though the regions were highly differentiated. Italians comprise many physical types—Alpines prevail in northern and central Italy; Mediterraneans, in the south. With the exception of fewer than 100,000 persons (mainly Waldensian Protestants and Jews), *Italians* were considered Catholic. Believers, whether practicing or nonpracticing, constituted only about one-third to two-fifths of the whole, most of the others being indifferent. Declared atheists, agnostics, and freethinkers were, however, few.

The distinction between rural and nonrural populations was sharp, as was that between socioeconomic classes. There was strong family loyalty and solidarity in most of the rural and village communities. Educated people tended to be strongly nationalistic, but at the same time deeply attached to their regions. Urban and rural working classes usually cared little about the nation. In spite of local phenomena like the illegal *Mafia* in western Sicily, individual Italians usually had little liking for violence. They tended to respect the traditional authority of the clergy and upper classes and felt little devotion to the state, which was always considered an outsider and—by many—an enemy.

Features of the Italian Economy

In the census of 1936, the Italian labor force numbered slightly over 18 million, or about 42 percent of the population. Nearly half were engaged in agriculture; about one-tenth served in public administration, the professions, and domestic service; while the balance worked in industry, transportation, banking, and trade. Wage earners numbered little more than half of the labor force, the others deriving their income from independent activities. Of the latter group, the overwhelming majority were people with either minuscule businesses or marginal farms. There was large-scale underemployment in agriculture, and chronic unemployment in nonagricultural activities. A negligible proportion of individual incomes was derived from social security. Many of the ten million Italian families were aided before the war by relatives who had emigrated to the Americas or who worked as seasonal laborers in other European countries, particularly France and Switzerland. At the outbreak of World War II, Italy's gross national product was, as it still is today, about one-tenth that of the United States. Economic conditions varied considerably both by class and region: The north was nearly as prosperous as France, the south nearly as poor as its eastern Mediterranean neighbors.

The Italian Fascist regime which came to power in the 1920's prided itself on having invented a new economic formula, called corporativism, which differed from both capitalism and collectivism. Its main features were strict governmental control, subordination of both employers' organizations and labor unions to the state, a high level of protectionism, and so-called autarchy—an attempt to render Italy as independent as possible of foreign markets.

During the 1930's the economy stagnated and, judging from consumption figures for a few staples, the standard of living declined slightly. Huge sums were spent on wars big and small, on a large military establishment, on impressive but often wasteful public works, and on attempts to settle Italian communities in Italy's African possessions—Libya, Ethiopia (conquered in 1936)* Eritrea, and Somaliland. Rigid and efficient censorship, limitations on contacts with other nations, and well-organized propaganda, coupled with the threat of repressive measures, kept any expression of economic dissatisfaction to a minimum. Economic factors contributed to the demoralization of the Italian nation in 1942-43, but not so much as military defeats and heavy human losses.

The Fascist Regime of Benito Mussolini

Political factors had far more bearing on the growth of the wartime resistance and insurgency. The Fascist movement, originally organized in March 1919 by the newspaperman and former revolutionary Socialist leader, Benito Mussolini, had seized power in October 1922, after nearly four years of political unrest and considerable violence. The new regime successfully overcame various crises and, by November 1926, had established itself as an anti-Communist, totalitarian dictatorship and had created a one-party state.

Convinced Fascists were relatively few in Italy and they were recruited nearly exclusively from the middle classes. Convinced anti-Fascists were also relatively few. Though most Italians did not share the Fascist ideology and did not particularly care for Fascist policies one way or the other, it can be safely assumed that until 1937-38 a majority, if they had been able to express their beliefs, would have approved of Mussolini's dictatorship. The situation changed during the following years, as the strains imposed by the military effort, and later by the military defeats, increased.

Until July 1943, the government operated within a strictly hierarchical structure; the efficiency of each echelon depended on that of the echelon immediately above. At the top was Mussolini, the Duce, who was just turning sixty and aging rapidly. His physical condition had deteriorated, his grasp of events had weakened, and his control over subordinates had lessened. Party leaders and cabinet ministers were divided into several small cliques, ranging politically from those who were absolutely intransigent and totally attached to their German ally, to those who wanted to liberalize the Fascist regime and were moderately sympathetic to the Allies.

* For Italian counterinsurgency there, see Vol. III, Chapter One, "Ethiopia (1937-1941)."

Among the extremists who supported Mussolini's policies, the principal spokesmen were the incumbent and former secretaries of the Fascist party; the group also included the Minister of Defense Marshal Ugo Cavallero and Marshal Rodolfo Graziani. The moderates' spokesmen were former Foreign Minister Achille Grandi and two other prominent personalities, Giuseppe Bottai and Luigi Federzoni. As time went on, Mussolini's influential son-in-law and Foreign Minister, Count Galeazzo Ciano, veered from an extremist position to a moderate one. Fascism had been consistently supported by small but influential groups: monarchist high officials and officers, whose chief loyalty was to the King and whose most distinguished leaders were Marshals Pietro Badoglio and Enrico Caviglia; the upper and much of the lower Catholic clergy; business people; and titled landowners. By 1943, however, all were considerably less enthusiastic about fascism than they had been in previous years.

The Clandestine Anti-Fascist Movement in Italy

Legal opposition to the Fascist government had ended in 1926 when all non-Fascist political organizations had been outlawed; but a clandestine, organized opposition had continuously existed. Relatively few Italians and even fewer foreigners were aware of this; but, on the basis of the number of people arrested for political reasons, it is estimated that active anti-Fascists numbered many tens of thousands. The best organized underground group was the Communist party, whose acknowledged leader was the Stalinist Palmiro Togliatti, an exile in Moscow. A democratic underground, whose chief organization had been known as Justice and Liberty, nearly collapsed, but was reorganized in 1942-43 as the Action party. There were also clandestine groups of Socialists, conservatives, and anarchists.

Among those who had links with but did not participate in the undergrounds were a few distinguished personages of the pre-Fascist period: the philosopher Benedetto Croce, former Premier Ivanoe Bonomi, the economist Luigi Einaudi, and the last secretary general of the Catholic (Popular) party, Alcide De Gasperi. Among political exiles, the best known were former Premier Francesco Nitti (in Paris), former Foreign Minister Count Carlo Sforza (in Brussels, later New York), the founder of the Catholic party Don Luigi Sturzo (in London, later New York), and the historian Gaetano Salvemini (at Harvard University).

Italians Grow Weary of the War

On the surface, the Italian scene of early July 1943 seemed much as it had in 1926, but there had been changes. The most important of these were the loss of public confidence and vast war-weariness. Since December 1934, Italy had been almost constantly at war: Conquest of Ethiopia, participation in the Spanish Civil War,* attack on Albania, and invasion of Greece had followed in

*Italians participated in the Spanish Civil War on both sides. Mussolini's government sent army units to assist General Franco's Falangist troops, while many Italian Communists, Socialists, and other anti-Fascists fought on the side of the Spanish Loyalists.

close succession. Then Italy, formally an Axis ally of Nazi Germany, had declared war on France and Great Britain in 1940, and on the Soviet Union and the United States in 1941.

After 1940, the easy victories of earlier years were succeeded by serious reverses—in the Balkans in 1940-41, in East Africa in 1941, in North Africa in 1941-43, and on the Soviet front in the winter of 1942-43. Materiel was scarce and organization lacking; training was antiquated; morale, though high in some corps, was low in most. British ships inflicted heavy losses on the Italian fleet. Although air force pilots were generally skillful, planes and fuel were scarce. When Allied forces invaded Sicily on July 10, 1943, the 300,000 well-equipped Italian forces stationed there disintegrated; and the Germans had to defend the island practically alone. Allied bombing of Rome further lowered morale. When Mussolini met with the German dictator Adolf Hitler in northern Italy later that month to request greater aid, he received an answer that was somewhere between noncommittal and negative.

Internal Coup Leads to Italian Withdrawal From War

When the news leaked out in Rome that Italian requests had been refused by the Germans, two groups decided independently to act against Mussolini. At a meeting of the Grand Council of Fascism on July 24, the moderate majority expressed opposition to the Duce's policies and a motion was carried to limit Mussolini's powers. And immediately following this action, a group of leading monarchists persuaded King Victor Emmanuel III to order the arrest of Mussolini and to appoint Marshal Pietro Badoglio head of the government.

What was meant to be a coup d'état became a revolution. There was little or no violence, but within 24 hours most Fascist organizations collapsed. Former clandestine opposition groups now began to operate overtly, opposing the King and Badoglio as much as they had opposed Mussolini and fascism. The new government first undertook to carry on the war on the side of Germany, but by early August it was attempting to establish contact with the Allies.

The armistice signed with the Allies on September 3, 1943, by representatives of the royal Italian government was made public by radio on the evening of September 8, when a large Allied force was already in sight of the beaches along the Gulf of Salerno. The King and Marshal Badoglio, fearing arrest by the Germans, fled Rome on the 8th and took refuge in southern Italy in territory shortly to be occupied by the Allies.

Italian Institutions Generally Disintegrate as Allies Land in Southern Italy

The announcement of the armistice on September 8, coupled with news of the Allied landing in Salerno and rumors of more landings elsewhere, caused the collapse of Italy's military and civilian governmental structure, including much of the local administration. The process, however, was far from uniform, either in time or extent. The large civilian police force disappeared nearly everywhere, while the military police force (Carabinieri) kept its organization intact and

did its best to perform its duties. Railroad and postal employees generally remained at their jobs, but many local officials went into hiding, courts stopped functioning, prisoners were released, and prisoner-of-war camps remained unattended. Abandoned barracks and unattended military depots were often looted by the civilian population, and many soldiers and officers traded their weapons for civilian clothes—with the result that later there were many weapons in the hands of the population.

The Italian armed forces generally disintegrated as a fighting force. Although the air force kept part of its organization, it had few planes. Most naval units sailed to Allied bases and put themselves at the disposal of Allied naval commanders. Most important, the army dissolved. As on Salerno's beaches, many soldiers deserted during the night of September 8, and large numbers of noncommissioned and commissioned officers, particularly noncareer men,* soon followed suit. Except in a few individual cases, there was little thought of resistance or insurgency; most thought that the war had ended and simply wanted to go home. Where a strong esprit de corps existed (as in some Alpine, grenadier, artillery, and armored units) and where many soldiers simply did not know where to go, battalions and even regiments, but rarely divisions, remained intact. A few units, still acting as regular troops but lacking coordination and precise orders, tried to oppose the Germans. Their resistance, however, was quickly overcome, with small losses on either side.

The Germans Take Over the Fight Against the Allied Armies in Italy

Italy's defection from the Axis had not taken the Germans completely by surprise. German troops in Italy had been increased from 7 to 17 divisions by September 1943. The Germans moved rapidly to demobilize the Italian army, first disarming and later interning or deporting to Germany such Italian troops as had not deserted. With few exceptions, Italian field and general officers cooperated. In a report issued November 7, 1943, the Wehrmacht chief of staff announced that more than half a million Italian prisoners of war and military internees, including about 25,000 officers, were in German hands. The Germans had also taken from the Italians some 4,000 airplanes, 15,000 trucks, 10,000 guns, and 1,000 tanks and armored cars. Altogether, in Italy, the Balkans, and southern France, 83 Italian divisions had ceased to exist.

Simultaneously, the Germans moved to contain the Allied invasion of Italy. Starting on the night of September 8, German troops in Italy began to occupy strategic points such as crossroads, bridges, railroad stations, telephone exchanges, power plants, reservoirs, administrative headquarters, and warehouses. They occupied barracks, military depots, and defensive positions along the coast and in the interior. This was done in the area north of a line extending approximately from Salerno on the western coast of the peninsula, to Foggia, near the eastern

*It should be noted that most noncareer army officers were nonpolitical, whereas air force officers were generally Fascists, and naval officers were known for their monarchist sympathies.

coast. The few German units stationed south of that line and those on the island of Sardinia were evacuated rapidly to the north, with practically no losses.

While fighting was still going on in the Salerno area, which the Germans defended for nearly two weeks, the defensive Gustav line was prepared, cutting the Italian peninsula diagonally from the mouth of the Garigliano River in the west to a point east of the Matese mountain, on the Adriatic coast. The Allies reached positions along this line between October 1943 and early January 1944; but, except for the small Anzio beachhead taken in January 1944, the Germans held their line until the Allied breakthrough in Cassino, in the second half of May.

Germans Free Mussolini To Head a Puppet Government in Axis-Held Areas

Meanwhile, the Germans took steps to stabilize the political situation in that part of Italy which they held. As early as September 9, 1943, they announced a new Fascist government for Axis-controlled territory in Italy. On September 12, German commandos freed the Duce and on the 23d he was installed as head of the new Italian Social Republic, popularly called the Republic of Salò. Except for the operational area along the Gustav line and a few northeastern provinces under direct German administration, civil authority was placed in the hands of this puppet Italian government. The whole of northern Italy and nearly all of central Italy, which were thus under either direct or indirect German control, were the areas where the insurgency took place.

INSURGENCY

Almost as soon as the Italian armistice was announced, clandestine groups or squads were organized in cities and towns, and irregular bands were formed in the countryside, particularly in areas situated some distance from German lines of communication. There followed a concerted and widespread search for weapons and some clashes with Fascists—on rare occasions with small, isolated German units—as well as attempts to cross the lines and establish contact with the Allies.

Organisation of "Military" Bands

The insurgent bands organized at this time derived from both military and political backgrounds. From the demoralized Italian armed forces, several tens of thousands fled, individually or in small groups, to hilly and mountainous areas. Although most of these men were chiefly motivated by their inability to reach home and their fear of capture by the Germans, there were others who wanted to engage in active resistance against the Germans and their Italian collaborators. From the latter group, numbering at first only a few thousand, came those who organized themselves as irregular bands, their purpose at first being purely defensive. By

the end of September 1943, such bands could be found in many of the high Alpine valleys and in some Apennine areas.

These military bands were augmented by some escaped prisoners of war, mostly British and Slavs, who joined groups or even established their own small bands, mainly in areas of central Italy. These bands were often, but not always, in contact with "military" committees, organized clandestinely by army officers in Rome, Turin, and some of the other large cities. They called themselves Patriots, and considered themselves part of the Italian armed forces recognizing the authority of the Italian government set up by the King and Marshal Badoglio in Allied-occupied territory. On October 13, 1943, the Badoglio government declared war against Germany. For this sector of the insurgency, which described itself as, but was not, apolitical, Germans were the main enemy.

Organisation of the Political Resistance

Even before the armistice, an articulate political resistance had developed when responsible leaders of the democratic Action party, the Communist party, and the resurrected Socialist party had agreed on a common action policy. The initiative in bringing the three parties together was often taken by the Communists. Their universal slogan after the German attack on the U. S. S. R. in June 1941 was the formation of a united front against the Axis; and they insisted, in Italy as elsewhere in German-occupied Europe, on including in the unified national front all anti-Fascist political tendencies. The resistance therefore included two pre-Fascist parties which had been reorganized between the time of Mussolini's dismissal and the announcement of the armistice: the Catholic party, which took the name of Christian Democratic party and was headed by De Gasperi; and the conservative Liberal party, which had governed Italy at the time fascism seized power and whose most authoritative leaders were Senators Benedetto Croce and Luigi Einaudi, former Premier Vittorio Orlando, and former Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies, Enrico de Nicola. Two smaller anti-Fascist parties, the Republican and Labor parties, had also been reorganized in some sections of northern and central Italy.

After the armistice, anti-Fascists organized clandestine Committees of National Liberation (CLNs) in many of the cities and towns of German-occupied Italy. The CLNs recognized the leadership first of the Rome and later the Milan committees. Committees were generally composed of representatives of three to six political parties. In the CLNs, the left was represented by the Action, Socialist, and Communist parties, the right, by the Christian Democratic and Liberal parties; and hovering between left and right were the two smaller Republican and Labor parties.

Growth of the Political Resistance and the Increasing Importance of the Communist Party

Covert groups of activists were organized in cities and towns by the parties of the left; in this, the Communist party considerably outdistanced both the Socialist and the Action parties.

Covert groups connected with the Christian Democratic and Liberal parties usually engaged only in such activities as communications, protection, supplies, and finance.

When members of the Communist and Action parties and a few Socialists took to the hills and mountains, they usually avoided the "military" bands. In the countryside, they brought together and organized into "political" or partisan bands both escaped soldiers and other young people of military age or younger who were afraid of being conscripted for labor by the Germans or for military service by the re-established Fascist authorities.

Under the special conditions of hardship, fear, and isolation that prevailed in their new life, many of these young and essentially nonpolitical Italians were drawn into a political orbit. Enthusiasm and idealism were aroused, pride in being Italian was resurrected along lines different from those of nationalism and fascism, and political ideology was born or strengthened. Young men in the Communist bands soon found themselves drawn under the spell of experienced indoctrinators—men who had fought in the Spanish Civil War, or who had been in Mussolini's jails from the late 1920's to their liberation after the July 1943 coup, or who had infiltrated into Italy after the fall of France in May 1940 to reconstruct a Communist underground. For many indeed who fought in the resistance bands, this period became the most meaningful of their lives, and political loyalties born under these conditions died hard.

Political and Military Integration of the Italian Resistance Under the CLN Organisation

The "political" or Partisan bands kept in touch with the city CLNs, but neither group recognized the authority of the Badoglio royal government. Instead, they recognized the largely nominal authority of the Central Committee of National Liberation (CCLN) in Rome, headed by the former Premier and head of the Labor party, Ivanoe Bonomi. After the January 1944 Allied landing at Anzio, southeast of Rome, the Germans rushed reinforcements to the area and communication with Rome became extremely difficult. Regional CLNs in central Italy and the Committee of National Liberation for Northern Italy (CLNAI) then exercised supreme authority over the "political" sector of the insurgency.

In June 1944, shortly after the Allied liberation of Rome, King Victor Emmanuel, strongly hated by all anti-Fascists, yielded to Allied pressure and transferred his powers to his son, Humbert II, the Prince of Piedmont. Marshal Badoglio resigned, and the former chairman of the CCLN, Bonomi, became premier. It was hoped that this change would put an end to the division between the "military" and the "political" sectors of the insurgency in German-occupied territory. The hope was largely realized: Most "military" bands entered the CLN organization by giving their allegiance to one of the CLN parties, usually either the Christian Democratic party or the Liberal party. With the formation of the Corpo Volontari della Libertà (Liberty Volunteers) in June 1944, both Patriots and Partisans were to be included in a single "military" organization under the CLNAI.

General Cadorna Fuses Partisans and Patriots Into Liberty Volunteers

At the request of the CLNAI, Gen. Raffaele Cadorna, who had distinguished himself in giving battle to German armored units when they tried to occupy Rome, was parachuted into northern Italy in August 1944. It was hoped that he would be able to accomplish two aims. First, it was felt that he might succeed in acting as arbiter between the two most influential Partisan leaders, the democrat Ferruccio Parri, head of the Rosselli and Justice and Liberty bands, which formed the military organization of the Action party, and the Communist Luigi Longo, head of the Garibaldi formations linked to the Communist party. His second mission was to facilitate the absorption of the "military" bands into the CLN organization. In February 1945, Cadorna was appointed by the CLNAI as commander of the Liberty Volunteers.

Antagonism between insurgent bands with different political affiliations was at times acute and clashes sometimes occurred, but on the whole cooperation and concord prevailed. Tension was greatest in the north-eastern corner of Italy, where Italian Communist bands cooperated with Tito's Yugoslav Partisans, to the detriment of non-Communist Italian bands. In the western Alps, relations between Italian bands and French maquis were often unfriendly. The Swiss usually gave generous help to the bands located near their border.

Strength and Political Affiliation of Urban Underground and Guerrilla Bands

No reliable comprehensive strength figures exist for either overt or covert Italian insurgent groups. Nor is it easy to establish a clear-cut distinction between members of guerrilla bands, activists in the cities, and those who helped them. It may be roughly estimated that at the beginning of October 1943, one month after the armistice, there were tens of thousands of members in bands north of the Gustav line while city activists were numbered in the thousands. Winter brought hardship. Lack of food and shelter, as much as attacks by Germans and Fascists, caused many bands to disperse; others were reduced to a fraction of their former strength. By February 1944, there were probably no more than 15,000 to 20,000 men in the bands, of whom about three-quarters were in northern Italy and the remainder in central Italy. On the other hand, the strength of city activists remained fairly constant.

With the coming of spring, guerrilla strength increased rapidly, thanks largely to the tens of thousands of young people trying to escape German and Fascist recruitment. By early summer 1944, while the Allies were slowly advancing in central Italy—automatically ending the insurgency in liberated areas—there were probably as many as 120,000 Partisans and Patriots in the mountains and 10,000 activists in the cities.

During the summer, in preparation for a stand at the more northern Gothic line, between Spezia and Rimini where the peninsula joins continental Italy, the Germans engaged in severe and successful mopping-up operations in the northern Apennines. These were followed in late summer

and early fall by other mopping-up operations in the Alpine valleys. By the end of October 1944, Partisans and Patriots were again reduced to only a fraction of what they had been four or five months earlier. The numbers of city activists remained about the same as before: Many had been caught or had dropped out, but others had joined their ranks.

As the winter of 1944-45 came to an end, men who had been in hiding during the cold months returned to the bands and were joined by a number of new recruits. By early April 1945, when the Allies opened their final offensive, the number of Liberty Volunteers in the German-occupied area, including a little over one-third of Italy and some 20 million inhabitants, was again estimated at about 100,000. There were probably as many as 90,000 men in the bands, while the city activists still numbered about 10,000.

In terms of political affiliation, bands linked to the Communists accounted for about 40 to 45 percent of the total strength; those linked to the Action party, 25 to 30 percent; and former "military" bands now linked primarily to the Christian Democratic and Liberal parties, about 20 percent. The remaining 5 to 15 percent belonged to bands affiliated with the Socialist party or to small unaffiliated bands, of which there were many. All city activists were political. The majority were Communist party members or sympathizers and most of the others were Socialists; relatively few were Actionists or anarchists.

Basic Organization of Units in Cities and Countryside

In the mountains, the hills, and some large swampy areas of the plain, the basic unit was the band; in the city, it was the squad. City squads usually varied from 5 to 12 men; only a few were larger. These were supposed to be organized into brigades, 150 men being the maximum strength. A band, on the other hand, might vary in size from ten to several hundred men. Various factors determined the size—the degree of confidence the leader was able to inspire, his politics, and the availability of supplies—food, ammunition, and clothing, in that order.

Both "military" and "political" leaders in 1943 and early 1944 and the CLN in 1944-45 established a complicated field organization with brigades and divisions, linked to area, provincial, and regional commands. Theoretically a brigade would include 150 to 450 men, and a division several brigades, up to a total strength of 4,000 men. There were area commanders, at first usually appointed by the military committee of the party to which most of the brigades in the area were affiliated, and later by the regional and central military committees of the CLN. Provincial, regional, and central military committees were usually composed of four to six members.

This structure was, however, largely nominal. City activists, for instance, only obeyed orders coming from the political party to which they belonged. Nonetheless, this organization sometimes served a useful purpose: It provided a certain amount of coordination, distributed the supplies sent by the Allies among bands of different political coloration, financed the bands, and maintained communications with otherwise isolated areas.

Insurgent Aims and Tactics in Early Operations

During the first months of the insurgency, the aim of the bands was purely defensive. They were generally located in areas of little or no military interest to the Germans and their main activities may be described as exclusively internal: organization, collection of arms and ammunition, establishment of friendly relations with the local population, military training of new recruits, communication with other bands, preferably those sharing similar political views, and collection of food and warm clothing.

In early clashes, the insurgent bands, who were unversed in guerrilla warfare, met attacks by trying to defend their positions. This could be done with a measure of success only so long as ammunition lasted—usually a few hours, occasionally a few days. The bands had small arms and on rare occasions a few mortars or small artillery pieces; Sten guns and light machineguns were the most highly prized weapons. After a time the insurgents learned that they should abandon their positions before being encircled and that they should avoid battles and concentrate on ambushes. After these tactics were adopted, insurgent casualties in actual fighting were minimized.

Insurgents Provide Allies With Information

Immediately following the armistice in September 1943, resistance couriers had been dispatched to try to reach the Allies. Many were caught while trying to cross the lines, others gave up the attempt, but some did get through. It was a while before Allied authorities could screen them and establish their bona fides, but within three weeks after the Salerno landing a few were able to return behind the lines in central Italy, carrying with them what mattered most—a transmitter and a cipher key.

The British and Americans also received the cooperation of SIM, the Italian military intelligence agency whose network included active agents on both sides of the line. In October, SIM missions, acting on behalf of the Allies, went behind the German lines. For several months an important intelligence network operated from Rome, organized by officers in contact with SIM. Although strongly resented by the "political" sectors of the insurgency, SIM's cooperation was valuable. In December 1943, the first Allied mission reached northern Italy. Meanwhile, from northern Italy, CLN couriers had managed to establish contact with American and British intelligence agents in Switzerland. Among the CLN intelligence networks, two of the most efficient were ORI and Franchi, both linked primarily with the U. S. Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Thus the Italians were able to supply the Allies with useful military and political intelligence.

Active Operations Result in Limited Achievements

Offensive operations were undertaken largely on the initiative of local leaders trying to interpret general directives that the Allies and the Italian government in Allied-occupied territory

issued by radio. Raids were directed and carried out against German communication lines, bridges and railroad tracks were blown up, small Fascist and sometimes German garrisons and convoys were attacked, and internment and concentration camps were assaulted to free the inmates.

In the spring and early summer of 1944, bands were able to establish their control over relatively large mountainous areas, up to 1,000 square miles or more. There they organized "republics," some of which (Montefiorino in the northern Apennines, Val d'Ossola and Carnia in the Alps) had civilian populations of 30,000 to 50,000 inhabitants. The Val d'Ossola Partisans controlled the source of most of industrial Milan's waterpower, a strategically important area; short of arms, they were assaulted by the Germans and driven out within six weeks of establishing their regime.¹

City activists engaged in acts of individual and collective terrorism, more often against Italian Fascists than against Germans. In the industrial cities they also organized sabotage, slowdowns, and strikes. For example, serious strikes occurred in Milan in December 1943 and March 1944, and in Turin in November 1943 and June 1944. An active clandestine press was established and newspapers were published, with some well-known authors contributing. Although harassed, the underground proved adept at moving its presses and substituting new personnel when necessary. By this means, anti-Fascist and anti-German propaganda was spread and information that the occupiers wanted to suppress was circulated.²

Casualties and Counterintelligence

Overall insurgent casualties were heavy. Unfortunately, it is difficult to make a clear-cut distinction between those insurgents killed in actual fighting; the more numerous group of those who were executed after being taken prisoner; civilians killed for having given aid; and civilians executed or killed in the mistaken assumption they were insurgents or supporters. In addition, hostages were taken and in many instances executed. In the course of mopping-up operations in the summer of 1944, entire villages were wiped out. In one case, nearly 2,000 persons were killed in a single locality. The total number of insurgent casualties was estimated at about 60,000 to 65,000, of whom between 20,000 and 30,000 were killed or tortured to death.*

Some of these casualties were due to Italian informers, and counterintelligence was always important to both city activists and guerrilla bands. There was a perennial search for informers among the local population and for infiltrators into the movement. The number of spies and informers, or of supposed spies and informers, who were executed by the resistance was high and formed a significant portion of the counterinsurgent losses.

*To these should be added a few tens of thousands of members of the Italian regular armed forces killed in September-October 1943 after the armistice and those who died in internment camps, and about 8,000 Italian Jews (one-fifth the total number) killed in extermination camps.

Bases of Support for the Resistance

On the other hand, the Italian insurgency could not have maintained itself for twenty months had it not been actively supported by large sectors of the population, and at least passively supported by the overwhelming majority of the nation. Although Fascists and pro-German Italians were few, convinced anti-Fascists were also few and convinced anti-Germans only slightly more numerous. What mattered above all was the fact that most Italians wanted peace, that in their minds fascism and Germany meant war and an Allied victory the end of war. In the eyes of the public, the insurgents, whatever their politics might be, were identified with the Allied cause—that is, with the end of war and the return of peace—and therefore should be helped.

Farmers, though aware of the possible consequences, supplied bands, refugees, and escaped prisoners of war with food; gave sanctuary to those who needed hiding; and hid their own young men to avoid conscription by the Germans and Fascists. Few ever acted as informers. Landowners' country villas were often used as hiding places and as concentration points for members of the resistance. The clergy provided sanctuary in monasteries, convents, and parish houses. Members of the lower clergy volunteered to act as couriers; the upper clergy used their influence to prevent executions and deportations, and during the last few weeks acted as intermediaries to bring about the surrender of Germans and Fascists. Business people gave money, some willingly, others under coercion—most hoping to keep on good terms with the winning side. Industrialists cooperated with the recently established underground unions in order to curtail production. Great caution was required, because the Germans were active, efficient, and ruthless, and a sizable number of Italians were cooperating with them. On the whole, however, a strong net of anti-German solidarity protected the insurgents; and for the Italians, accustomed to bitter political divisions and rigid socioeconomic compartmentalization, this was a new and valuable experience.

Organization of British and American Aid for the Italian Resistance

Both the expectation and the reality of Allied aid were of fundamental importance to the Italian insurgency, geared from the beginning to the conviction that the Allies would win the war. For their part, the Allies had been anxious to establish contact with Italian anti-Fascist groups. After seven Allied divisions were withdrawn from Italy early in the summer of 1944 for the planned Allied landing in southern France, any aid the Italian insurgents could offer assumed new importance. On the British side, the Special Operations Executive (SOE), operating in Italy as Special Force No. 1, sent representatives to the guerrilla bands, while British Military Intelligence was entrusted with intelligence operations behind enemy lines, and a smaller British organization, A Force, attempted to recover prisoners of war stranded in enemy territory. On the American side, special operations were conducted by the Office of Strategic Services, whose unit in Italy was known as 2677th Regiment. The British and American missions were not integrated;

each operated in separate areas with its own bands. All clandestine operations in Italy, however, were coordinated within army group headquarters (Allied Armies in Italy, later known as 15th Army Group) and within the combined theater command in Italy (Allied Forces Headquarters, known as AFHQ).

By the summer of 1944, several dozen Allied missions had been sent into enemy territory—a few by land across the lines, some by sea, most by plane. Missions usually included two or three people; their composition varied, some being formed only of Allied personnel, others of Allied and Italian personnel, and still others of Italian personnel only. Approximately 200 missions were sent to the Italian resistance groups behind the lines of SOE and OSS during the insurgency.

Most Allied Supplies Are Airdropped

Through the information received from couriers and from missions, it also became possible for SOE and OSS to send supplies to the insurgents by sea or, preferably, by air. The first drops occurred in October 1943; they increased in frequency and quantity until July 1944. For several months thereafter, German mopping-up operations, the collapse of the hope that the Germans would fall that year, the later diversion of supplies and airplanes to the Allies fighting in southern France and to the Polish Home Army fighting the Germans in Warsaw in August and September, and the coming of winter brought a decline of Allied aid to the Italian insurgency. In November 1944, the Commander in Chief of the Allied Armies in Italy, General Harold R. Alexander (later the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean), realizing the difficulty of supplying the partisans, directed them to disband for the season.

Some resistance leaders viewed this order as a manifestation of bad faith—an attempt to prevent the Italians both from participating in the liberation of their country and from creating the new postwar social order they envisaged for Italy. Also, since most of the partisans then remaining in the hills and mountains had nowhere to go, it was impossible for them to comply with the order.³

Supplies were delivered more frequently and in greater quantities after February 1945. Supplies included weapons (small arms), ammunition, medicines, clothing, and some foodstuffs. Allied records indicated that by the end of the war over 6,000 tons of supplies had been airdropped, 68 percent from U.S. army aircraft.⁴ This did not mean, however, that 6,000 tons were recovered by drop-zone crews. Italian estimates of Allied supplies range from 3,000 to 4,000 tons, which may suggest the rate of recovery. Resistance leaders have indicated that this amount covered about half of what was needed.

Formalisation of Relations Between the Allies and the Italian Resistance

Relations between the Italian resistance and the Allied powers in Italy were finally formalized in late 1944. Four representatives of the CLNAI and AFHQ met in November and December

1944 and reached an agreement in which the CLNAI gave assurances that its military arm, the General Command of the Volunteers of Liberty, would carry out Allied directives and would come under direct Allied command as Italy was liberated, and that the CLNAI itself would recognize the Allied Military Government (AMG) to be established in former enemy-occupied territory. By thus dealing directly with the CLNAI, the Allies gave it and its Liberty Volunteers official status. They also agreed to give financial support, up to 160 million lire a month, to the Volunteers of Liberty. And in a following agreement signed on December 26, 1944, by the same representatives of the CLNAI and the Bonomi government, the Italian government in liberated Rome recognized the CLNAI as "the organ of the anti-Fascist parties in enemy-occupied territory," and appointed the CLNAI as its delegate in the struggle against Fascists and Germans.

New Missions Undertaken by the CLNAI

The new importance of the CLNAI and the Liberty Volunteers was reflected in the missions assigned them by the Allies—to harass the lines of communication of retreating Germans, safeguard the economic resources of the country against German scorch tactics, and maintain law and order in areas vacated by the Germans until the Allied Military Government should arrive.⁵

It was not until early April 1945, however, when the Allied armies were again on the move, that the military breakthrough came near Bologna. Then, while the Germans were slowly trying to withdraw toward the Alps, the partisans rose. The Liberty Volunteers, swelled in late April to their greatest numbers, took over in towns, sometimes as in Turin after heavy fighting against Fascists, or as in Genoa after fighting the Germans, but most often after the Germans had pulled out or holed up in their barracks and cantonments awaiting the arrival of Allied forces to accept their surrender. When hostilities came to a close on May 2, 1945, most important towns in northern Italy were in the hands of the Italian partisans prior to the coming of the Allied armies, and the mission to thwart German scorch tactics had, in many instances, been successfully carried out.⁶

COUNTERINSURGENCY

Just as several months elapsed before the Allies realized the existence and potential value of the insurrectionary movement developing in German-occupied territory, so it also took several months for the Fascists and the Germans to become aware of the insurgency, to recognize its exact nature, and to conclude that strong measures would be required to suppress it.

Neither Italian Fascists nor Germans Consider Rebellion a Possibility

There were many reasons for the delay. The Fascists, accustomed to a docile populace, did not believe that a mass-supported revolt could be mounted against them. They were convinced

that their opposition was limited to the small monarchical groups and a few old-time active anti-Fascists. Moreover, Italian Fascists had an interest in minimizing the size of the insurgency as much as possible in order to strengthen their own position with the Germans.

The Germans, in turn, were unable to reconcile an insurrection with their own image of the Italian nation. Although attempts to enforce labor conscription had caused anti-German rioting in Naples during the four days preceding the arrival of the Allies, both German experts and Fascist advisers regarded this as merely an isolated episode touched off by the emotionalism of the Neapolitans and the proximity of Allied troops.

Similarly, the concentration of thousands of "bandits" in the upper reaches of the Alps and Apennines in the fall of 1943 was interpreted as the rather unimportant last act in the disintegration of the regular Italian armed forces. In the German view, the fact that many disbanded ex-soldiers had joined together did not mean that they were organized or that they meant to fight; it was nothing "serious." German authorities were confident that they would be able to liquidate rapidly what they considered to be only the remnants of the Italian armed forces, to crush totally any attempts that "Communists" (as Germans tended to call all anti-Fascists) might make against the German occupiers, and in general to keep the situation under control.

Most of the Italian army surrendered quietly and in unit formation, and the Germans moved quickly to dispose of disbanded Italian soldiers behind their lines. In late September and early October, small German infantry units—usually a battalion or less, with some artillery support—easily cleared disbanded soldiers and officers from several areas in which they had concentrated. These areas extended from the Maiella mountain in central Italy to the southern Alps in Piedmont and were relatively close to points of military interest to the Germans. Even where disbanded soldiers numbered several thousands (as for instance at Boves, in Cuneo Province) and had capable officers to lead them, there was never more than token, inefficient, and badly organized resistance. Neither side suffered many casualties of dead or wounded. On the other hand, numerous prisoners caught with weapons were executed, and the remaining captives were conscripted for labor.

As Insurgent Activities Grow in Intensity, Mussolini Becomes Aware of the Threat

Correctly viewing this resistance of a small fraction of Italian troops as a last feeble gasp of the disintegrated Italian army, the Germans failed to realize that parallel to this residual resistance was a new phenomenon—the formation of insurgent guerrilla bands in the mountainous and hilly regions and of active clandestine groups in the cities. Several developments before winter set in should have warned the Germans that something different was taking place. "Political" bands had been formed whose names—Garibaldi, Rosselli, Matteotti—were by now known to the Fascist authorities and were evidence of their political nature and affiliation. Also, a

large-scale, although partial, strike in Turin at the end of November had paralyzed industrial production: this was of even greater concern to the Germans than Italy's military defection. Fascist authorities knew, as their reports showed, that the strike had been organized by Communist and Socialist underground labor leaders. Furthermore, in a number of localities Fascist leaders, including a few high ones, had been assassinated; 28 lost their lives during the last days of November alone.

From late November insurrection was in the making. When the January 1944 Allied landing took place at Anzio, rebel raids disrupted road and rail communications in central Italy. By the end of January, Mussolini was convinced that the insurgency was as great a threat to both his and the Germans' positions as the Allied occupation of southern Italy. This conviction, however, was still not shared by the German authorities.

The Divided and Impotent Government Under Mussolini

Divided authority and conflicting policies presented further obstacles to liquidating the insurgency. Despite advice to the contrary, the German dictator Adolf Hitler had decided not to treat German-occupied Italy as enemy territory (in the category of Poland and Serbia*), but to allow it to have its own government and be treated more or less as an ally (in the category of, for instance, Hungary and Slovakia).

The new Italian Fascist government under Mussolini attempted to maintain a certain status, stressing its rights and seeking a degree of autonomy. Mussolini, however, was a worn-out man and no longer controlled either himself or his supporters. Describing Mussolini at this time, German Field Marshal Albert Kesselring remarked that "he was past his prime, both in health and power." Neither confident of his followers nor physically energetic enough to act with resolution, Mussolini "surrendered more and more to the lethargy of philosophic speculation. He was now no longer a dictator," wrote Kesselring, "only a man who through the vagaries of life had glimpsed the mountaintops"

Mussolini and some of his adherents wanted to remain entirely in control of internal affairs, including the liquidation of the insurgency. At first they hoped to accomplish this with their own forces; by the end of spring 1944, however, they realized that they did not have sufficient manpower, to say nothing of materiel, and concluded that German aid was indispensable. Nonetheless, they still wanted to be in control of operations. Other more realistic Fascist leaders, among them the first Minister of Interior Renato Ricci and former party secretary Roberto Farinacci, had been willing from the beginning to act in all fields under direct German supervision and to accept German orders. A third group, led by Marshal Rodolfo Graziani, who had

*See Chapter Nine, "Poland (1939-1944)," and Chapter Eleven, "Yugoslavia (1941-1944)."

become Minister of Defense and head of the few regular Italian armed forces, rejected a subordinate position and wanted to be treated as Germany's ally, in both internal and military affairs.

German Reactions to the Italian Fascist Government

There was a similar lack of consensus among high German leaders in Italy. The operational commander, Field Marshal Kesselring, wanted to treat Italians as a vanquished enemy and was opposed to the creation of an autonomous Italian armed force, either for fighting at the front or for dealing with the insurgency. He had only reluctantly accepted Hitler's decision to set up a puppet government in German-occupied Italy,⁸ and within his own considerable field of authority, he did his best to disregard the Italians.

On the other hand, the German territorial commander, Gen. Rudolf Toussaint, was disposed to share the administration of nonoperational zones with Italian Fascist authorities. The chief German political authority, Ambassador Rudolf von Rahn, was convinced that Italian hostility to the Germans would lessen if they could feel masters in their own house; he therefore intended to strengthen the Fascist government and give it a good deal of responsibility. The chief security officer, SS Gen. Karl Wolff, tended to agree with Rahn. Intrigues and bickering went on for months. It is doubtful that greater unity would have succeeded in stamping out the insurgency completely, but quarrels led to delays which were bound to weaken the effectiveness of counter-insurgency measures.

Fascist Forces: Local and Personal Irregulars

Mussolini was in a poor position to deal with the insurgency, since, in the fall of 1943, he had no armed forces at his disposal. Efforts to create some Italian armed forces were therefore made at three different levels: local, often personal, irregular forces; governmental irregular formations; and governmental regular troops.

In the weeks immediately following the armistice, a few energetic Fascists set up their own irregular forces. One of the largest—and the best trained and equipped, thanks to the personal interest of German Grand Adm. Karl Doenitz—was the X^{ma} MAS (10th Torpedo-boat Flotilla), a commando land unit organized around a small core of Fascist naval personnel at the naval base of Spezia who had refused to go over to the Allies. Prince Junio Valerio Borghese was the organizer and commander of the X^{ma} MAS, which reached a strength of about 4,000 men (over 10,000, according to Fascist sources).

Another well-known but smaller irregular force formed through individual initiative was the Muti (named for the former Fascist party secretary Ettore Muti, assassinated in August 1943). The Muti reached a strength of about 500 men (4,000, according to Fascist sources). In certain localities in northern and central Italy, old-time Fascists revived the squadristi, which 20 years before had battled unarmed anti-Fascists. In Rome, Florence, and Verona, Fascists

organized themselves as irregular and revolutionary police corps, replacing the regular authorities and at times coming into conflict with German military authorities because of their excesses. The population called these irregular police corps "bands" and their members "bandits." On their own initiative, some of these voluntary irregular formations attacked insurgent bands in the mountains, usually with little or no success, and engaged, more successfully, in reprisals against captured insurgents and those who had helped them.

Fascist Forces: Governmental Irregulars

An important attempt to create Fascist armed forces occurred when Minister of Interior Renato Ricci, in collaboration with party officials, tried to set up governmental irregular formations. In November 1943, Ricci first organized the Republican National Guard (GNR). On paper, it reached a strength of 140,000 to 150,000 men. In February 1944, the German and Fascist authorities decided to use the GNR against the insurgents. Only a relatively small number of units were effectively employed, usually as auxiliaries of German troops; according to Fascist sources, about 35,000 men participated in the counterinsurgency operations of March and April 1944. Lack of equipment and training coupled with poor morale made the GNR inefficient. Its members were mainly young men who wanted to avoid German labor conscription and still believed, in late 1943, in a German victory. A few months later this belief no longer held.

In view of the ineffectiveness of the GNR, Mussolini, in late spring 1944, entrusted General Mischi with the command of special counterinsurgent units, the CARS (Corpo Addestramento Reparti Speciali). The CARS should have included the local Fascist irregular formations, but the X^{ma} MAS and others refused to cooperate. At the end of June, when it became more and more imperative to attack the rapidly growing insurgent bands, now supplied with increasing regularity by the Allies, Mischi had only 3,000 men, instead of the 10,000 promised him.

In July, Mussolini decided to militarize sectors of the membership of the Fascist party, starting with the thousands of Fascists who had fled from central Italy after the Allied breakthrough at Cassino. Called Brigade Nere (Black Brigades), the new units were able to enlist only about 6,000 party members (30,000, according to Fascist sources). Unlike the GNR, the Black Brigades were reliable, but they had few men. Equipped by the Germans and acting to the end as efficient German auxiliaries, the Black Brigades failed to break the insurgency. Instead, their excesses fanned the hostility of the population against both Germans and Fascists. Other governmental irregular formations were the CO-GU (Counter-Guerrilla Units), and the RAP (Anti-Partisan Units). These had only a few members and were relatively insignificant.

Fascist Forces: Regular Troops

On the third level were regular Fascist government troops. In spite of the opposition of Field Marshal Kesselring in Italy and of Reichs Marshal Herman Goering and others in Germany,

Hitler had authorized the formation of an Italian regular armed force, to be commanded by Marshal Graziani. During the first half of 1944, about 60,000 men, formed into four divisions, were trained in southern Germany and equipped by the Germans. Two divisions returned to Italy in midsummer 1944. According to the Germans, 10,000 men deserted immediately; according to the Fascists, only 5,000. The other two divisions were sent to Italy before the end of the year.

Both Field Marshal Kesselring and his successor, Gen. Heinrich von Vietinghoff-Scheel, refused to have Italian troops on the front, except briefly on a short stretch of the Gothic line near the Ligurian Sea. During the last few months of the war, the remaining parts of the four Italian divisions were used, like the Black Brigades, as auxiliaries of German forces repressing the insurgents in northwestern Italy (Piedmont and Liguria), the area of most intensive insurgent activity. On the whole, Italians proved to be ineffective in dealing with the insurgency.

Responsibility, Organisation, and Command of German Forces for Fighting the Guerrillas

In the case of the Germans, there was a difference in mission and some rivalry between regular Wehrmacht forces and special SS units. German regular troops, both territorial and operational, had taken charge, in the fall of 1943, of disarming Italian divisions and mopping up concentrations of disbanded soldiers. In the winter and spring of 1943-44, troops belonging to the territorial command, which controlled 50 of the 60-odd provinces of German-occupied Italy, engaged in numerous successful mopping-up operations against bands, which German authorities still believed were mainly the residue of the Italian regular forces. The Wehrmacht was responsible for the conduct of all operations, including those against guerrillas, in the forward combat zone. SS units stationed in the cities and Gestapo personnel (not numerous in Italy) were, on the other hand, mainly concerned with the repression of pro-Allied espionage and sabotage activities. Until May 1944, antiguerrilla activities outside the forward zone were the special preserve of the SS Reichsführer.

In May 1944, the Wehrmacht commander, Field Marshal Kesselring, was given "absolute authority in dealing with the Guerrillas in the Italian theatre of war," with the Supreme SS and Police Leader, SS Gen. Karl Wolff, personally subordinate to him. In effect, this meant that the SS conducted operations within its own zone on its own responsibility and also carried out Kesselring's directives. The function of suppressing insurgent activists in the cities was entrusted primarily to SS units, aided by squads of antisaboteurs and demolition experts. In dealing with the bands, SS units might be combined with Wehrmacht troops, Italian autonomous and governmental formations, Italian SS units incorporated in the German forces, two below-strength divisions of "Vlasov's Army,"* and, toward the end, small groups of miliciens, French

*Recruited among Soviet prisoners of war and anti-Communist exiles from the U.S.S.R.

collaborators who had fled France before the advancing Allies. In principle, the senior German officer, regardless of service, commanded. Either closed or mixed units under an independent command were also kept in readiness to be committed in large-scale operations against the partisans.⁹

Strength and Training of Counterinsurgent Forces

It was reckoned, rather approximately, that from May 1944 to the end of the war a year later, as many as one-third of the forces available to the German command in Italy were engaged in fighting insurgents or in isolating insurgent-held areas. This would include almost 200,000 men; however, these were never all used in counterinsurgent operations at the same time. The number was high, but with the exception of the German SS, the general quality of the counterinsurgent troops was mediocre. Fighting against the Allies took precedence over fighting against the insurgents and the best troops were almost constantly on active duty at the front lines.

To the elements of weakness already mentioned—incorrect estimates about the insurgency, divided authority, inefficiency of Italian Fascist troops, and mediocrity of most available German units—should be added the lack of serious training in counterinsurgent action. The Italian Fascist governmental irregulars were as undisciplined as the individually formed Fascist irregular groups. Although some German SS units had received antiguerrilla and antisabotage training and a number of Wehrmacht units had sometimes had considerable experience in fighting insurgents in German-occupied areas outside Italy, these were the exceptions. Much of the counterinsurgent action was entrusted to officers and men who had received only conventional military training.

Germans Show No Interest in Nonmilitary Measures

Although it is true that counterinsurgent units easily dispersed bands whenever direct clashes occurred, German commanders proved least able to deal with the insurgency where it mattered most—in relation to the support given it by a majority of the Italian population. Also, both the Germans and the Italian Fascists failed to appreciate the important subjective elements in the insurgency—the strength of the emotions driving the insurgents, their ideology, political beliefs, and willingness to accept discipline and face sacrifices. It should be noted, however, that, with the war already going badly for the Axis, there was little scope in German-occupied Italy for effective nonmilitary counterinsurgent measures. The German-sponsored Fascist government made plans for economic and social reforms, but the German authorities showed a total lack of interest, and the plans were not implemented.

In view of the situation existing at the time, it is doubtful that implementation of reforms would have altered events appreciably. The Germans' main nonmilitary concerns were for the

recruitment of Italian labor, chiefly for use in Germany, and for a high level of industrial and agricultural output. On both counts, the Germans met with almost complete failure. The failure was part of the general situation, of which the insurgency was another manifestation. Only military success against the Allies could have modified the situation to the advantage of the Germans.

Germans View Guerrillas More Seriously as Casualties Increase

It was not until April 1944 that plans to crush the rebellion were discussed, rather perfunctorily, at a summit meeting between Hitler and Mussolini. This was the first time that the overt insurgency was recognized by the Axis as sufficiently dangerous to require a general plan to liquidate it—as distinguished from mopping-up operations undertaken by local German tactical authorities. Instructions were given to the German military and political authorities in Italy and concrete steps were adopted soon after to stamp out the insurgency methodically.

If German army commanders in Italy were generally less interested in the antiguerrilla problem than in their front lines, their Commander in Chief was not unaware of its dangerous potentialities. By June 1944, with the fall of Rome, Kesselring considered that the Italian insurgents "might critically affect the retirement of my armies."¹⁰ This judgment concerning the possible gravity of the insurgent threat was to be confirmed when, for the three-month period of June-August 1944, Kesselring's intelligence officer reported to him that German losses to the partisans were 5,000 killed and 25,000-30,000 wounded or kidnaped. According to his own reduced estimate, Kesselring thought "a more probable minimum figure" to be 5,000 killed, 7,000-8,000 killed or kidnaped, and possibly a like number wounded. "In any case," he claimed later, "the proportion of casualties on the German side alone greatly exceeded the total Partisan losses."¹¹

German Tactics Against Guerrillas and Population

The German theater commander therefore ordered the antiguerrilla war to be fought in the same manner as the battle at the front. Tanks, artillery, and flamethrowers, formerly reserved for the front lines, were now to be used also against the partisans. The best troops "were only just good enough." All plans were enshrouded in secrecy, and strictest security was maintained over troop movements. Reconnaissance was given the highest priority, because the aim was to kill guerrillas, not capture territory: "The capture of a Partisan hide-out was of no practical use," according to Kesselring, "unless they defended it."¹²

The Germans were able to take any insurgent-held area once they decided to move in strength. Although German counterinsurgent units entrusted with the destruction of insurgent bands were usually smaller than their opponents', they enjoyed superiority in armament. The scarcity of both planes and fuel, however, minimized the use of the German aircraft for

counterinsurgent actions.* Tactics used by German commanders eventually became uniform: German units and their Italian auxiliaries would surround an insurgent-held area; then, after softening it up with intensive artillery fire, they would advance under the protection of tanks and armored cars. There were few cases of prolonged resistance.

As an example, after the Allied breakthrough at Cassino in May 1944, SS troops were entrusted with the function of clearing insurgents from the Apennine area of the Gothic line to which the Germans withdrew during the summer. The insurgents numbered several tens of thousands, and some of the bands held several hundred square miles. Within a few months, the area was completely cleared, and even later there was no regrouping of insurgent bands. In the fall and winter of 1944, the Germans undertook the clearing of partisan-held areas that threatened their lines of communication on their possible retreat through northern Italy. By late September, using 30,000 troops, they eliminated the Monte Grappa bastion in the Veneto; by the end of October, they cleared up important partisan-held areas in the Val d'Ossola and Val d'Aosta; by the end of the year, they had eliminated crack partisan bands in the Veneto and the Carnia and wiped out the "Republic of Carnia." Along with heavy partisan casualties, the Germans inflicted numerous civilian losses through reprisals.¹⁴

German reprisals against the civilian population—destruction of villages, taking of hostages, and shooting of persons in retaliation for partisan activities—proved an extremely effective weapon and helped in area pacification. After several massacres had taken place, insurgents—either of their own accord or following requests made by religious and lay spokesmen of the civilian population—would often disperse when warned that SS units were coming. The arrival of SS units in an area was often enough to stop all insurgent activities.

In some cases, the Germans tried to isolate and leave partisan-held areas that were not of direct military interest to them. As relatively few counterinsurgent forces were available, isolation was effective only where narrow gorges and passes made it possible for small units to seal off the area, as in the case of some Alpine valleys.

In the cities, the Germans were able to establish fairly effective anti-espionage and anti-sabotage networks, using their Italian Fascist collaborators as intermediaries. As long as they were physically present, the Germans had the situation at least superficially under control, both in the cities and the countryside.

Mussolini Tries To Re-establish a Popular Base for Fascism

As the Axis position deteriorated in the winter and spring of 1944-45, Mussolini's government unilaterally undertook certain nonmilitary moves in an attempt to regain mass support and

*Kesselring claimed that he avoided the use of air power for humanitarian reasons, to avert civilian casualties.¹⁵

meet the growing crisis in northern Italy. Between October 28 and November 10, 1944, the government pressed home to the partisans a series of amnesty bids, but these met with little or no success.¹⁶ Even at this late date, Mussolini introduced a series of social reforms. For example, collective mess halls and communal consumers' cooperatives were established, requisitioning of farm produce and food wholesale warehouses was intensified, and the distribution of merchandise was more carefully supervised.

In January 1945, a series of decrees were drafted to reform taxes, reduce civil service salaries, and regulate transportation. In February began the socialization of large-scale industrial plants, Fiat and Montecatini being among those affected, though only nominally. Furthermore, Mussolini moved to bring fascism into wider political focus, trying—with no success—to enlarge its base by establishing collaboration with non-Fascist elements. An opposition newspaper was allowed to publish for a brief period, and much was said by a few Fascist leaders about cooperation with Socialists and Republicans. But only a handful responded to these overtures,¹⁶ which were unrealistic in the face of the overall military situation, the total and uncompromising opposition of the CLN, and the Allies' demand for unconditional surrender.

Germans and Fascists Attempt Surrender Negotiations

As early as October–November 1944, some German officials, acting through intermediaries, had made the suggestion to the CLNAI that in return for partisan neutrality when the Germans withdrew, the Germans would limit their scorch to railway lines. The proposal was not accepted, but it did produce some discussion in partisan ranks.¹⁷ By March 1945, both Fascist and German spokesmen were in contact with the Allies to explore the degree of hardness in the unconditional surrender line and any possible advantages to be gained. Bringing the captured partisan leader Parri with him as a token of good faith, the Supreme SS and Police Leader, General Wolff suggested to Allen Dulles, head of the European OSS, in Zurich that the Germans would forgo scorch if the Italian partisans would renounce guerrilla warfare and the Allies accept the German surrender and guarantee personal safety to prisoners of war.¹⁸ Wolff's proposal came to nothing* and the German surrender by General von Vietinghoff did not actually occur until April 29.¹⁹

Meanwhile, after the Allied breakthrough at Bologna, Mussolini, through an ecclesiastical intermediary, looked for a contact with CLNAI leaders to explore the possibility of a safe surrender, but apparently he was determined to do this only with German knowledge. When informed, shortly before his one meeting with CLNAI representatives in Milan on April 25, that

*In addition to the Wolff–Dulles exchange, there were a few other instances of behind-the-scenes offers and counteroffers, negotiations, and conversations. These, however, had little meaning, because neither the CLN nor the Germans and Fascists could be sure of their interlocutors' identity and real authority.

the Germans had already negotiated--and even offered to disarm the Black Brigades--the shocked Mussolini broke off negotiations and fled the city. Thus in the last days of the Axis alliance, it was each man for himself.²⁰

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

In what has been called the "ultimate double cross," German troops with whom Mussolini was fleeing Italy surrendered the Duce and other Fascists to Italian partisans without resistance on April 27. As decided previously by the CLNAI, Mussolini was executed on April 29, 1945, and his mistress, Claretta Petacci, who had accompanied him, was shot at the same time. Their bodies were later exhibited, hanging by the heels, in Milan.

Many other Fascist hierarchs and followers met an equally quick fate. Estimates of reprisals taken against Fascist collaborators at war's end range from a low of some 2,000 given by a postwar minister of interior, to 5,896 by the Rome Institute of Statistics, to 40,000 by the writer Carlo Simiani, to 300,000 claimed by neo-Fascists.²¹ The reprisals undoubtedly included cases of personal revenge and mistaken identity. Public hooliganism also occurred, looting and banditry taking place in the name of partisan warfare. These outrages, however, lasted only a short while, and public order was generally restored surprisingly fast.

Wartime Accomplishments and Postwar Effects of the Resistance

The partisans in Italy made it possible for the Supreme Allied Commander in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations, Field Marshal Sir Harold Alexander, to concede that Italy had "worked her passage."²² Italians provided the Allies with much intelligence information and a network for sabotage, saved Allied lives both by their escape systems and their tiedown of enemy troops, maintained control over northern cities before the Allied troops arrived, and helped to preserve Italy's economic facilities. Finally, they gave Italians back their political self-respect.

The insurgency, as a source of new-found national pride, was an important reality. Italians were proud of their active participation in the war against Germany, which had required the solidarity of a majority of those who, after the armistice of September 1943, found themselves in German-occupied territory. Self-esteem was also enhanced by the fact that measures to crush the insurgency had failed.

The Communist role in the resistance provided a basis for their power in the postwar period--in local governments, cooperatives, and labor organizations. Participation in the anti-Fascist resistance provided a mantle of respectability; it strengthened their ties to the Socialists and thus made it possible to avoid postwar political isolation. The determination with which they had fought the Fascists and Germans helped the Communists merge into the mainstream of

Italian political life and win a large vote in successive elections. In this sense, the effects of the resistance period are still operating today.

An Assessment of the Counterinsurgent Failure

Counterinsurgency failed, but one should be aware of the nature of the failure. It was primarily the result of Allied victories on conventional military fronts. The half-hearted, poorly organized, and largely ineffective Italian Fascist counterinsurgent action may be discounted. One cannot discount German counterinsurgent action. Whenever the Germans decided to act vigorously against the insurgents, they were successful—even when their numbers were small in relation to their opponents'. Methodical, brutal repression and terrorism against the civilian population gave the Germans results which their Italian auxiliaries were unable to achieve. In all likelihood, the Germans would have stamped out the insurgency in a few months had not most Italians been convinced that Germany was bound to lose the war because of growing Allied superiority.

The course of the Italian insurgency cannot be separated from Allied military initiative and success. The expectation shared by most Italians—whether they liked it or not—that final victory would belong to the Allies was the main factor that kept the insurgency going. German counterinsurgent measures were effective, but their effectiveness was counterbalanced by the Italians' hope of ultimate success. This hope enabled the insurgency to rise anew each time it was crushed.

NOTES

Author's Note: This paper is based primarily on information collected by the author while serving with the British Special Operations Executive in Italy from July 1943 to August 1945. There is a considerable literature on the Italian insurgency: diaries, memoirs, political interpretations. Scholarly, reliable works are few. There is little published literature on the counterinsurgency, and what does exist is highly subjective.

¹ Elizabeth Wiskemann, "The Italian Resistance Movement," in Hitler's Europe (Survey of International Affairs, 1939-1946); eds., Arnold Toynbee and Veronica M. Toynbee; London: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 334-35.

² Ibid., p. 333.

³ Ibid., p. 335.

⁴ Craven, Wesley Frank, and James Lea Cate (eds.), Europe: Argument to V-E Day, January 1944 to May 1945 (Vol. III of The Army Air Forces in World War II); Chicago: University of Chicago Press (1951), p. 517.

⁵ Wiskemann, "The Italian Resistance Movement," p. 336; Charles F. Delzell, Mussolini's Enemies: The Italian Anti-Fascist Resistance (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1951), pp. 463-69.

⁶ Wiskemann, "The Italian Resistance Movement," pp. 336-37.

⁷ Field Marshal Albert Kesselring, Kesselring: A Soldier's Record (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1954), p. 217.

⁸ Ibid., p. 229.

⁹ Ibid., pp. 274-75.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 275.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 272.

¹² Ibid., p. 275.

¹³ Ibid., p. 276.

¹⁴ Delzell, Mussolini's Enemies, pp. 449-50; Massimo Salvadori, Storia della Resistenza italiana (Venice, 1955), pp. 158, 160, 169.

¹⁵ Delzell, Mussolini's Enemies, p. 453.

¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 472-74.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 454.

¹⁸ Ibid., pp. 495-96.

¹⁹ (Field Marshal the Viscount) [Harold R.] Alexander (of Tunis), The Italian Campaign, 12th December 1944 to 2nd May 1945 (Report by the Supreme Allied Commander Mediterranean to the Combined Chiefs of Staff) (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1951), p. 48.

²⁰ Delzell, Mussolini's Enemies, pp. 523-28.

²¹ Ibid., pp. 545-46.

²² Ibid., p. 550.

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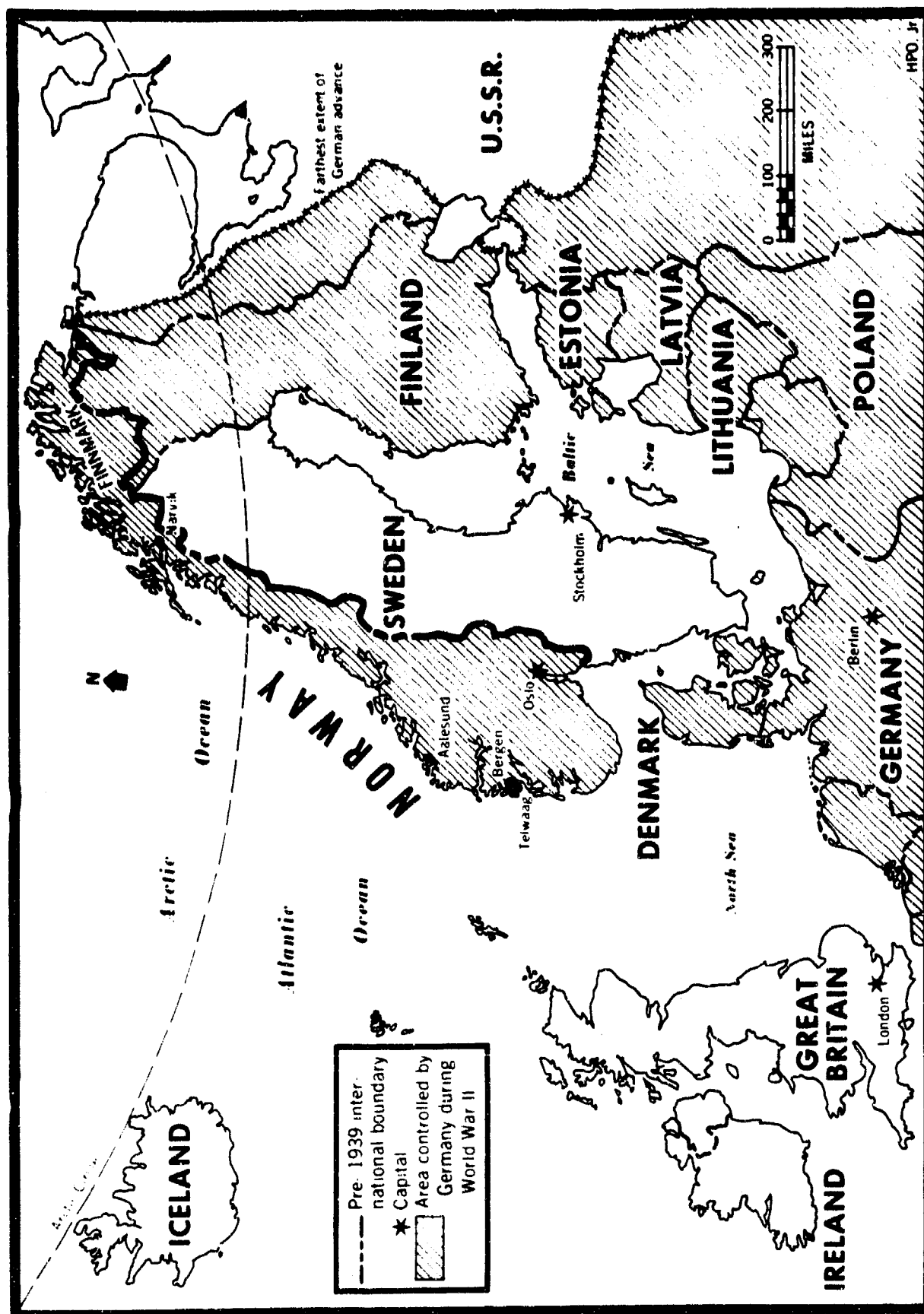
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Chapter Eight

**NORWAY
1940-1945**

by Charles O. Lerche, Jr.



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Despite the availability of an eager collaborator in Vidkun Quisling, German plans for Norway were frustrated by the rise of an indigenous resistance movement which finally forced the occupying authorities to resort to terroristic measures they did not wish to use.

BACKGROUND

The invasion of Norway by Nazi German troops in the early days of World War II brought to an end 125 years of unbroken peace that dated from the country's appearance as a modern nation during the latter years of the Napoleonic wars. Blessed by physical remoteness and political self-restraint that had kept it out of power politics during the 19th century and World War I, Norway had developed an articulate and progressive democratic society that asked little more of the world than to be left in peace.

In 1940 Norway enjoyed one of the highest standards of living in Europe. With a remarkably homogeneous population, a stable government, an economy nicely balanced among farming, fishing, shipping, and light industry, and with no serious internal or foreign tensions, Norway and its fellow Scandinavian countries seemed to have come as close to solving the problems of 20th-century life as any nation in the world.¹

The Norwegian economy in 1940 was a model for a small, highly organized society. Agriculture and forestry were dominant, and industry and shipping vied for second place. The country was virtually self-supporting in food and its extensive imports were more than offset by its shipping earnings. In 1940, Norway had the world's fourth largest merchant fleet. Wealth was relatively evenly divided: Poverty had been all but eliminated, and very few Norwegians were rich.

Location and Topography as Strategic Considerations

It was not Norway's economy but her geographic location that made her involvement in the war inevitable: The Gulf Stream kept Norway's west-coast ports open the year around, thus making it possible for iron ore from neutral Sweden to be shipped easily from the Norwegian port of Narvik to Germany. The Germans were anxious to protect this route, the British equally interested in interrupting the traffic. Germany moved first and Norway fell to the Nazis.

Norway is relatively large by European standards, being some 3,000 square miles larger than the British Isles. Its terrain is mountainous and its coastline is heavily indented. Although mountainous terrain would seem to be ideally suited for guerrilla warfare, this proved not to be true in Norway. The snow that covered its ranges most of the year made tracking easy. Food and other necessities were not locally available in the mountainous regions of the interior, supply by air was extremely difficult, and the valleys were sparsely populated and easily kept under observation.

The People of Norway and Their Politics

The Norwegian population of some 3,000,000 was unevenly distributed: Large clusters could be found only in the southeast, around the central lakes, and in a thin strip along the west coast. Two-thirds of the population was rural in 1940, and only 18 urban centers had more than 10,000 inhabitants. Religious homogeneity (97 percent of the population was Lutheran), the absence of divisive social classes, and vigorous patriotism all tended to unify the people when the Germans came. Prewar differences, based partly on personalities and partly on economic and social-welfare issues, were quickly forgotten at the time of national crisis. The monarchy and the Labor government were both popular. Only a small pro-Nazi group was available for exploitation by the occupation forces.

The Norwegian state was headed by a constitutional monarchy so thoroughly integrated into Norwegian life as to be frequently classified as bourgeois. The King in 1940 was Haakon VII, who had ascended the throne in 1905 as the first Norwegian monarch in modern times. From the 15th century to 1814, Norway had been ruled by Danish kings; from 1814 to October 1905 the Norwegian crown had been united with that of the Swedes. The Labor party, a socialist party, had controlled Norway without interruption since 1927; after it came into power, the radicalism that had marked its earlier history had rapidly dissipated. Its primary opponent was the Conservative party; other opposition parties included the Liberals and the Agrarians. Norway's miniscule Communist party had held no seats in the Storting (the parliament) since the 1920's.²

The only other deviant group was Major Vidkun Quisling's Nasjonal Samling (NS). At its prewar peak, the Nazi-aping NS had almost 40,000 members, yet it had never won a seat in the Storting. Prewar Norwegians had largely ignored Quisling and his uniformed NS followers as frivolous and irrelevant to the main course of national affairs. During the 1930's, the electoral strength of the NS actually declined, and there is no evidence that Quisling ever had anything like a mass following. His appeal was to disaffected individuals in Norway who might be susceptible to the fear of the "Bolshevik menace." That so few responded—less than two percent of the electorate—suggests how little fundamental discontent there was in the country before the Nazis arrived.

The Nazis Invade Norway and the Government Flees to London

The government, though ideally adapted to manage in days of peace, was unable to cope with the events of 1940. Its inaction during the weeks preceding the invasion indicated its feebleness, its inability to face the reality of rapidly moving events, and its reluctance to adopt emergency measures until it was too late.³

In a technical sense, the story of the Nazi invasion of April 9, 1940, and the struggle of the next 82 days belong in the chronicle of the Norwegian resistance. The principal military purpose of the six-division Norwegian force that took the field against the invading Germans was to conduct a holding operation—to retain its identity and occupy some Norwegian territory until an expected Anglo-French relief force arrived. The foreign reinforcements—when they finally arrived—were inadequately equipped and far too few in number to turn the Germans back. The battles before June were thus only a preliminary to the underground resistance that sprang up later.

The fighting had not gone on for very long before the Norwegian government faced the alternatives of surrender or the continuation of the struggle from exile. They chose the latter firmly and without hesitation, and doubters were carried along by the example of the nation's leaders. On June 7, 1940, the King and the government went into exile in London, an action which was taken with the approval of the Storting, which met far in the north, with only five of its 150 members absent, while it was itself in flight.

With some changes in personnel, the 1940 cabinet remained in control of the resistance at home throughout the war. The Prime Minister in London was Johan Nygaardsvold. The Foreign Minister during the days of the invasion was Halfdan Koht; later, in London, he was replaced by Trygve Lie. C. J. Hambro, President of the Storting, remained a tower of strength in the resistance, and Gen. Otto Ruge served in Britain as Commander in Chief of the exile Norwegian Army of the Resistance.

For five years, the Norwegian populace, left to face the rigors of German occupation, looked for leadership to their government-in-exile in London. The invasion unleashed a tidal wave of patriotism: dedication and courage became the public norm, and there was no general resentment at the government's departure as there was in some other Nazi-occupied countries.

INSURGENCY

The resistance within Norway to the German occupiers and Quisling began almost immediately after the German takeover; its history was one of growing intensification of effort and national support. By the fall of 1942, resistance was regarded as a "duty" to be performed in the most efficient and professional manner possible. The resistance, furthermore, was united under the leadership of the Norwegian government-in-exile, so that there were coordination and agreement between the expatriates and the Home Front.

Berg and Berggrav Create a Popular and United Home Front Movement

The resistance leaders included many of the most influential and respected Norwegians. Although the early resistance was spontaneous and uncoordinated, it was built into a single Home Front movement under the outstanding leadership of Paal Berg, Chief Justice of the Norwegian Supreme Court in 1940 and a former Liberal minister. On December 21, 1940, he and other members of the Supreme Court resigned in protest against German actions in Norway, a move that has been called "the first real gesture of resistance."⁴ Despite his age (70) and his lack of any military experience, Berg set about uniting the Norwegian resistance into a single organization with both a civilian and a military division.

In his work, Chief Justice Berg had the active cooperation of the Primate and "greatest personality" of the Norwegian state church, Bishop Eivind Berggrav. By February 1941, Berggrav had led the other bishops in openly opposing Nazi policies. Pastoral letters challenged German executions of resisters, the persecution of Norwegian Jews, forced labor practices and deportations, imposition of Nazi education and organizations on Norwegian youth, and the terrorist tactics of Quisling's storm troopers (the Hird). Berggrav is credited with bringing the Socialists and the trade unions into cooperation with the Home Front. In February 1942, Bishop Berggrav joined the other bishops and most of the clergy in resigning; and on April 9, he was finally arrested. Even in confinement, however, he is said to have continued to communicate with resistance forces.⁵

The leaders epitomized the spirit of the people. The Norwegians, a self-sufficient and predominantly rural people, familiar with the land and able to cope with adverse terrain and weather, were admirably suited for this type of insurgency. Apparently spontaneous demonstrations in enthusiastic support of a British air raid on Oslo occurred in that city as early as September 1941. National pride, at first more offended by the role of Quisling and his party than by the German military victory, was driven beyond endurance by successive humiliations at the hands of the Germans. National solidarity was assured in an almost universal hatred of the Germans and the Quislings. It has been said that over 90 percent of the population⁶ supported the Home Front effort.

Strategy and Tactics of the Home Front

While the overall aim of the resistance was the liberation of Norway from Nazi and Quisling rule, the fundamental strategy of the Home Front was to reduce the effectiveness of the occupation and to keep alive the Norwegian spirit; only secondarily and later did the Home Front resort to guerrilla warfare and active military harassment of the enemy.⁷ The main tactics of the insurgents therefore included the dissemination of propaganda, the supplying of intelligence to Germany's enemies, and covert sabotage. Every effort was bent to negate those

measures that Germany sought to impose upon the Norwegian population, particularly the labor draft and the military service draft.

Probably the most important function of the resistance was the dissemination of information. Radio broadcasts and newspapers not specifically authorized by the occupying forces were made illegal shortly after the occupation began; however, despite strong opposition from the Germans, illicit radio receivers rapidly came into use throughout the country and clandestine newspapers appeared. It has been estimated that between 200 and 300 such papers were circulating regularly throughout the country. As repressive measures increased in stringency, news was spread by organized word of mouth.

Intelligence information, often of military significance, was transmitted to London, usually by couriers traveling across the North Sea in tiny fishing boats. For example, Norwegian information that the German battleship Bismarck had left its port in Bergen made it possible for the British royal navy to intercept the Bismarck and sink her in one of the most dramatic episodes of the early years of the war.²

In Norway, as elsewhere in occupied Europe, the technique of covert sabotage was expressed in the watchword of the anti-Nazi resistance, "Work slowly, work badly." In addition, selected targets were actively sabotaged. Although these efforts were not too successful at first, they later became highly effective. In general, however, the Norwegians' intent was to undermine the German war effort but not to destroy Norwegian plants--with the exception of those directly involved in military production. Norwegian sabotage was therefore characterized by a minimum of physical destruction, but even so it was apparently very telling in its effects.³

Norwegian Efforts To Thwart German Labor Conscription

Efforts to prevent the use of Norwegian labor for German economic and war purposes began in response to a "voluntary" labor service--made compulsory after May 1, 1941--which at first affected only Norwegian males between 20 and 26 years of age for a period of 3 months' service. This relatively mild measure was replaced a year later with a harsher one, when Norwegian businesses were informed that they were to give up approximately one-third of their personnel for agricultural work and later another third for work on air fields and fortifications in Norway. Early in 1943, the Germans announced new plans that amounted to conscription of males between 18 and 55 years old for work on fortifications and railways and females between 21 and 40 to replace the men on their usual jobs. Reports soon leaked out that men were being shipped to Germany or used in semimilitary German units.⁴

Norwegian harassment made it exceptionally difficult for the Germans to impose the labor draft. As early as September 1940, the trade unions had dissolved themselves and destroyed their membership lists in anticipation of just such a move. Despite this, however, the Germans netted an annual supply of about 18,000 workers in 1941 against an estimated supply of 25,000

from the first plan; and the 1942 conscription apparently resulted in the immediate transfer of 70,000 Norwegian workers to German defense work.

In 1943 the Norwegians redoubled their efforts to delay or obstruct the conscription of workers. In Oslo the chief of police, Gunnar Ellisaen, refused in August to arrest recalcitrant women; for this act he joined the growing list of Norwegian martyrs. It has been claimed that underground activities were responsible at one point for decreasing to 3,500 workers the 35,000 that the Germans had expected. Escape rates to Britain, Sweden, and elsewhere rose sharply. Some idea of the effectiveness of the Norwegian underground in thwarting Nazi measures may be gained from the fact that its "emigration service" transported about 50,000 persons, most of whom were avoiding the labor draft, to Sweden or England during the war.¹¹

Efforts To Avoid Military Draft and Nazification of Youth

Early in 1944, the Norwegian resistance captured plans indicating that Quisling had promised to mobilize 75,000 Norwegians for service in the German armed forces. The military conscription was to be effected under the guise of the labor conscription. Apparently because of the premature disclosure, which enabled the Home Front to sabotage German records and to hide Norwegian men of military age, implementation of the plans had to be postponed for several months. In June 1944, Quisling complained that "Norwegian youth hides and takes to forests when we demand that it work for the people of the country."¹²

The Norwegians also resisted attempts to nazify their youth. Demonstrations and strikes occurred in 1941 in protest against the Quisling "Youth Guard" and early Nazi attempts to revise the educational curricula. Further resistance later that year resulted in the closing of many schools throughout the country. Early in 1942 the Quisling government ordered all youth to join a Nazi youth organization and all teachers to join a Nazi teachers' organization. Parents and teachers, backed by the bishops and clergy, protested. Most teachers continued to refuse in the face of threats to deport them to northern Norway for compulsory labor. It is reported that 1,300 teachers had been arrested and sent to prisons, concentration camps, or compulsory labor by the end of March. Nevertheless, the postwar royal Norwegian government reported that "the Quislings had to give in without having carried out their plans."¹³

Milorg—Military Arm of the Resistance

The military arm of the Norwegian Home Front was known as Milorg, the Norwegian Army of the Resistance or the Force of the Interior. Considered by most Norwegians to be an agency of the government-in-exile, Milorg originally consisted of remnants of the six Norwegian divisions that had fought the German invaders.* Milorg probably always had at least 20,000

*A large portion of Norway's armed forces accompanied the government when it moved to London.

able-bodied men under its command; the exact figures, however, are unknown. The number of military personnel fluctuated constantly, since men were transferred between London and Norway, usually in small boats but also by parachute drops. Some 40,000 Norwegians emerged from the underground in the last days of the war to arrest collaborators and to hold the country until the government arrived from London.

It should be kept in mind in evaluating the role of Milorg that the underground was conducting a "war without battlefields." German forces occupied all crucial points in the country and held the civilian population substantially as hostages. Milorg's objective was to harass and embarrass the Nazis sufficiently to make the Norwegian occupation unprofitable, without at the same time provoking heavy reprisals against either the civil population or itself. If the insurgents had suffered from an excess of zeal and evoked large-scale and systematic reprisals (as happened in Czechoslovakia and France, for example), the high degree of unity and the intense patriotism of the people might have suffered severely. The primary purpose of the insurgent army was thus to be enough of a force-in-being on Norwegian soil to cause the Germans constant and considerable uneasiness and to force them to dispose themselves against it.

As a result, Milorg worked in loose collaboration with local resistance leaders, pinpricking the Nazi occupiers by sabotage, minor guerrilla activity, and miscellaneous harassment. No areas were defended, few Germans were killed, and no pitched battles were fought against the Nazis.

External Aid for the Norwegian Resistance

The extent to which the Norwegian insurgency was a part of a multinational effort is significant. The Nazi successes of 1940 had arrayed a major coalition against the Germans; and from the beginning, Norwegian insurgents received foreign assistance. At various times and in various ways, aid was forthcoming from Great Britain, Sweden, France, Canada, Ireland, and Poland, with Great Britain and Sweden contributing most heavily. Although the exact part played by Sweden must remain more or less cloudy, her role being complicated by her status as a neutral, all Norwegians agree that Swedish aid was considerable.

Probably the most important foreign contribution to the Norwegian insurgency throughout the war was the sanctuary and base offered by Britain. The Norwegian royal government found a home in London from which it could direct its war of insurgent resistance. Norwegian troops that had been evacuated in 1940 were trained in British and Canadian camps. The British Broadcasting Company made its facilities available to the Royal Norwegian Broadcasting Service, thus opening an invaluable avenue of communication between London and the Home Front. It was due to British sanctuary that the integrity of Norway's original government was preserved, and in spite of recurrent tensions, the relationship between the Norwegian government-in-exile and its British hosts was generally close and harmonious.¹⁴

One example of British assistance was the training of clandestine radio operators. After the Nazi occupation forces confiscated all radio receivers in Norway in 1941, radio operators trained and equipped in England were dropped by parachute into Norway, there to play a crucial role in propaganda and intelligence work. Of several hundred volunteers for this work, more than one-third eventually lost their lives. Yet it is difficult to imagine how the close coordination between the London government and the Home Front could have been possible without their efforts.¹⁵

British Commando Raids in Relation to the Norwegian Resistance

British commando raids on Norwegian coastal installations held by the Germans contributed indirectly to the resistance. Although these raids were among the most exciting events of the war prior to the Allied invasion of the continent in June 1944 (and a constant source of gratification to the populace of Britain and the United States), they were neither frequent nor especially productive of military results, at least in Norway. Casualties (mainly British) among the raiders were high, and the sabotage was relatively minor. The Germans retaliated fiercely against the local population, imposing fines, seizing and sometimes executing hostages, and imposing much stricter regulations; martial law was eventually invoked in the northern coastal districts.

In view of the reprisals that they provoked, the raids probably aroused little enthusiasm among the local population.¹⁶ Yet they served a real purpose. By repeatedly demonstrating the vulnerability of the Norwegian coastline, the raids threw the Germans ever more firmly on the defensive and encouraged the local populace to believe more strongly in the certainty of eventual Allied liberation.

Home Front and Milorg Hold Fast to Principle of No Guerrilla Warfare

By October 1944, the Germans in Norway had more than a Home Front with which to cope. On the 25th, Soviet troops crossed the Norwegian border in pursuit of German troops retreating from Finland. The German evacuation of Finnmark, Norway's most northern province, was accompanied by scorched-earth tactics, which brought about the only heavy damage the country suffered during the war. In arctic temperatures and perpetual night, the Finnmark Norwegians saw their towns and villages burned, their livestock slaughtered, and themselves ruthlessly evacuated. Yet, to the dismay of the Finnmark people, Milorg held fast to the principles of the Home Front leadership and the government-in-exile: It refused to encourage open guerrilla warfare with its risk of even worse reprisals. Nonetheless, Home Front forces, now reinforced by Norwegian paratroopers flown from Britain and by British air and naval operations, did help in harrying the German retreat from northern Norway. By December the German

military commander had succeeded in extricating only two of the seven divisions he was supposed to return to Germany for redeployment.¹⁷

Early in 1945, insurgent operations were stepped up somewhat and entered a more active military phase as greater quantities of Allied supplies reached Milorg. Norwegians who had been trained in Britain as secret agents aided the underground in carrying out operations against ships and railways, factories, and oil stores.

In retrospect, the Norwegian Home Front was a model of common sense and efficiency. Its roots lay in a broad-based and virtually spontaneous popular resistance to a hated invader and a despised puppet regime. Popular loyalty remained firmly at the command of the royal government-in-exile and the Home Front. These two entities, led by men of courage and wisdom, realized that the liberation of the country from the Nazis would come only as an incident of a general Allied victory. Thus guerrilla warfare with its resultant wholesale reprisals was not demanded of the Norwegian people. The wisdom of this policy was demonstrated when the country emerged from the war relatively intact.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

As German troops were attacking Norway on April 9, 1940, their most important Norwegian supporter was Vidkun Abraham Lauritz Johnson Quisling. The nature of this man, whose name has become synonymous with treachery and treason, was extremely complex.¹⁸

Vidkun Quisling—the Nature of the Man

Two accounts of Quisling's childhood vary, but both agree on the external factor of his gloom and eccentricity, if not on the subject of his academic brilliance. Overwhelmingly ambitious, showing signs of a sense of persecution, and sensitive to the slightest insult, the adult Quisling is reported to have lacked the ability to make decisions and to follow through on decisions once made. Before his career was eventually finished, Quisling was to be thrice rejected—by the Norwegians, by the Germans, and by his own followers in the Nasjonal Samling.

Quisling started his career well enough. After making a good record at the military academy, he became an officer in the Norwegian army and at the age of 30 was a captain on the General Staff. After spending two years in Finland as military attaché and secretary to the Norwegian Legation, he was selected in 1922 by the celebrated humanitarian Fridtjof Nansen to help in a relief project then under way in southern Russia. In 1927, Quisling became the joint representative of Great Britain and Norway in Moscow for timber concessions.

While in Russia, Quisling met Fredrik Prytz, the man who later became the financial backer of Quisling's party in Norway and a means of his entrance to elite Nazi groups in Germany. At this time also Quisling apparently made a fortune in Russia, through collecting art works and sending them back to Norway under diplomatic immunity. By 1930 he had left the Norwegian

army, had been quizzed by Soviet police concerning the activities of Prytz, had given up his plan to live in Moscow, and had returned to Norway a bitter anti-Communist. Married to a Russian and speaking Russian perfectly, Quisling was sympathetic to the Russian people—and remained so even after his early feeling for the Communist experiment had turned to bitter hatred.

Writing of his own life at this point, Quisling said, "My interest outside of my daily affairs has concentrated more and more on the search for a unified theory of existence. . . . I hope still to be able to say my word before the final silence comes down."¹⁹ In his search, which became more political than personal, Quisling was eventually to traverse almost the entire political spectrum: From his original sympathy for the Communist experiment, a succession of moves brought him to the extreme right. Trying first the Workers' party, then the Peasants' party, Quisling finally became Minister of War in the Conservative government of Peder L. Kolsted. From this position, he launched an extreme attack on the Social Democrats and then tried to replace Kolsted as Prime Minister.

Quisling Founds a Party, Helps the German Invasion, and Tries To Set Up a Government

Quisling's party, the Nasjonal Samling (NS), founded in the summer of 1933, became the final vehicle in his attempt to translate his philosophic quest into reality. The NS was against Bolshevism and the League of Nations, and jingoistically pro-Norwegian. Although Europe was in ferment and fascism triumphant in Italy and Germany, Quisling's NS party received only 26,000 votes in 1936, not enough to capture even one seat in the Storting. Almost totally rejected by the Norwegians, Quisling made his first trip to Berlin in mid-December 1939, when, with the German naval Commander in Chief, Admiral Erich Raeder, he met with Hitler to discuss the necessity of a German invasion of his country in order to defeat the British. Hitler's reactions were ambiguous, but apparently Quisling received support from the influential Alfred Rosenberg, official Nazi ideologist and intimate of Hitler.²⁰

Accordingly, when the German attack took place on April 9, 1940, Quisling refused to obey the mobilization order of the Norwegian commander in chief, and evidently ordered his followers to guide invading German forces. In the confused state of affairs existing in Oslo, he was able the next day, with some German support, to proclaim himself head of a new Norwegian government in Oslo. Quisling's effort was shortlived, however, for the Germans desired the outward symbols of legitimacy; and constitutional practice required that the government both represent the predominant political party and have the King's assent. Neither condition was met, and Norwegian reactions were so openly negative that the first Quisling government lasted only a few days.

Quisling Aids the German Administration and Becomes Head of Government in February 1942

On April 15, 1940, the Supreme Court of Norway appointed an Administrative Council of loyal Norwegians to govern the occupied country. The Germans, however, were dissatisfied with this arrangement. On April 24, Hitler appointed Josef Terboven as Reich Commissioner, the highest German authority in Norway. The Germans managed in June to pressure the presidential board of the Storting into requesting the King to abdicate as a preliminary to a peace treaty, but this the King, safe in London, refused to do. The Germans then rejected the efforts of the five largest Norwegian parties to form an anti-Quisling coalition government. Finally on September 25, Terboven declared the Norwegian royal house dethroned, the government and all parties except Quisling's abolished, and the Administrative Council dismissed.

In their place, Terboven became Supreme Administrator of Norway with a board of provisional state counselors (later called ministers) to assist him. Although Quisling himself, while leading the collaboration, held no public office, most of the counselors were NS party members. Terboven issued decrees having the force of law and used the German police to enforce them. Because the Norwegian courts were not allowed to test the validity of these laws, all members of the Norwegian Supreme Court resigned in December 1940. After that, the court was packed with men more amenable to Quisling's control. Eventually the court gave legal sanction to a Norwegian national government under Quisling; and on February 1, 1942, the latter became Minister President of Norway with a cabinet of thirteen members.²¹

Terboven and Quisling: Conqueror and Puppet

The relations between Quisling and Terboven, who remained as Reich Commissioner, have been the subject of much speculation and are still not altogether clear. As early as August 1940, Quisling complained to Hitler that Terboven did not support the Nasjonal Samling leader politically. Furthermore, in Germany, Admiral Raeder continued to undermine Terboven's role, while supporting Quisling. According to Raeder, Terboven fundamentally opposed Hitler's instructions that efforts were to be made to inculcate a favorable view of the Germans among the Norwegian populace and that Norway was eventually to be brought as a sovereign state into a "north Germanic empire."²²

In a speech in Oslo on October 4, 1941, Terboven seemed to confirm Raeder's estimate when he complained to the Norwegians that they failed to appreciate German magnanimity in bringing food to Norway when not bound to do so under international law and when "it is a matter of complete indifference to Germany . . . if a few thousand or tens of thousands [of] Norwegian men, women, and children starve. . . ."²³ Nevertheless, throughout much of the war, the Germans in Norway were on their good behavior. To the race-conscious Nazis, the Norwegians were, after all, fellow Nordics, perhaps better Nordics than the Germans themselves; and the

occupation of Norway was much milder than that of France, to say nothing of the horrors visited on Slavic Europe.

The promotion of Quisling to Minister President did not bring much change in policy. Terboven and the Germans remained the real power in Norway; Quisling's government simply implemented German decisions. At his inauguration, Quisling "endeared" himself by declaring that the Norwegian people "need a severe schoolmaster. . . who can teach national discipline."²⁴ Although he vested himself with the authority belonging constitutionally to the King and Storting, Quisling was and remained the creature of the Germans.

In April 1943, the Nazis curtailed Quisling's powers considerably. Every Quisling mayor was placed under the supervision of a member of the Reich commissioner or of the local armed forces (Wehrmacht) commander. The Norwegian press was told that Quisling did not "issue" orders; he "signed" them.²⁵ Nevertheless, if the real authority in Norway was German power, its principal and willing indigenous tool—whether officially constituting a government or not—was the NS.

Quisling Tries To Set Up Forces Similar to Nazi Units

The Quislingites established certain instrumentalities to help control the country and to aid the Germans. The Nasjonal Samling Organization (NSO) was a formalization of the earlier NS on the lines of Hitler's Sturmabteilungen, or SA, the military force of the Nazi party. The political troops of the NSO were organized as a "State Hird," a legalized reincarnation of the gangs Quisling had used in the 1930's for street fighting and agitation. The Hird, responsible only to Quisling, but led by Oliver Moystad and Thorvald Thronsen, was used for propaganda marches, party demonstrations, and punitive expeditions. At least on paper, a number of military and paramilitary organizations were formed. A Norwegian SS, based on the German Schutzstaffeln, was led by Quisling's efficient Minister of Police, Jonas Lie; on July 21, 1942, it was renamed the Germanic SS Norway, becoming a section of the "Great Germanic SS." The Nordland Regiment was formed to fight in the German Waffen-SS under German SS General Damm; and a Norwegian Legion, also destined for the fighting front, was formed in June 1941, its leadership eventually to be taken over by the German SS. Finally a Norwegian Panzer Grenadier Regiment was organized to replace both the Nordland Regiment and the Norwegian Legion.²⁶

None of these was very successful. At its height in 1942, the NSO had 30,000 members or about 1 percent of the population. The State Hird was able to recruit only 1,500, the Nordland Regiment only a few hundred, and the Norwegian SS approximately a thousand. The Panzer Grenadier Regiment completely failed to materialize, drawing only 34 volunteers during its first year. A police school sponsored by Quisling followed a similar course. Although 300 candidates enrolled for the first session in June 1941, the second class was canceled owing to a lack of candidates, and only 14 of an expected 500 candidates appeared for the third.²⁷

German Forces in Norway: Strength and Casualties

The German establishment in Norway was considerable. Norway was an important area to the Nazis, both because of its location as a potentially vulnerable northern flank and because its port of Narvik was required for the transshipment of Swedish iron ore. The civilian bureaucracy that administered the country, including government officials, party functionaries, police, and propaganda experts, numbered around 25,000. The head of the German Gestapo (secret police) in Norway was Wilhelm Riedess and the commander in chief of the Wehrmacht (armed forces) was Gen. Nikolaus von Falkenhorst. At the moment of liberation, occupation forces totaled 400,000—by and large a mélange of second-grade forces seasoned with an admixture of first-line troops.

German casualties were not heavy: Only some 3,000 German casualties (dead and wounded) were claimed by the resistance forces. Such estimates are always questionable, but it is certain that this is a maximum figure, since fear of reprisals kept the insurgents from carrying out overt casualty-inflicting operations.¹⁸

Nazi Strategy in Norway

The German strategy in Norway was twofold. Politically and economically, Hitler and Terboven hoped to nazify the country and to integrate it into the new Europe they envisaged. According to Terboven, the German mission was to make Norway "forget its pro-English sympathies and orient itself in the European economy under German leadership."¹⁹

Militarily, the occupation was to safeguard Germany's northern flank from an Allied attack and keep any resistance under control until the Wehrmacht had won a battlefield victory. The military mission of the Nazi forces in Norway was therefore limited. The occupation forces intended, if necessary, to punish the indigenous population, but not to carry on any major campaign against them. In general, such insurgent forces as might exist were merely to be contained, not met in open combat. Counterinsurgency, at least as far as it represented a deliberate Nazi policy, was aimed at preventing the rise of resistance.

Political and Judicial Nazification

The heart of Germany's counterinsurgent strategy was in the nonmilitary area. In a broad spectrum of civil and political actions, the Germans penetrated deeply into Norwegian life. On the level of the central government they first tried to persuade the royal government to yield without resistance, but this failed in June 1940; then a plan to create a new pro-German government based on existing political parties was abandoned as useless; and finally the puppet Fascist regime under Quisling was imposed in 1942.

Local government was also nazified. In 1940, Terboven set up, in widely scattered places, a number of regional offices directly responsible to himself. In January 1941, local government

was brought under authoritarian control by the appointment from Oslo of local presidents and councillors. Local autonomy was thus eliminated.

"Judicial reform" placed the courts under NS and German control, culminating in a Nazi-type "Peoples Court" to try political offenses. Also, by a decree on September 17, 1941, Terboven made violators of his orders subject to the German SS Tribunal, which during the occupation gave the death penalty to more than 150 persons and imposed long terms of imprisonment on many others. Finally, the NS and its auxiliary organizations were declared part of the armed forces with the right to bear arms and to be tried only by military law.³⁰

Attempts To Control Norwegian Opinion

The total-society concept of nazism showed itself in the broad-gauge effort by the Germans and their Norwegian puppets to control all of Norwegian society. Control of public information media was a prime objective of the counterinsurgent forces. Following the occupation, all newspapers were immediately placed under the direction of the German military authorities and the propaganda department. The chief Nazi paper, Fritt Folk (Free People), seized the offices and press of the Norwegian Arbeiderbladet, the largest Labor party newspaper, and maintained its own subscription list by making it compulsory for civil servants to subscribe. Broadcasting was considered an unreliable instrument from the German point of view, since the Norwegians listened to London rather than to Nazi propaganda broadcasts; in September 1941, therefore, all receivers were confiscated and listening became illegal.

In their attempt to divert the mainstream of Norwegian thinking, the Germans and the Quislingites issued a series of decrees affecting the churches, the professions and civil service, agriculture, industry and labor, sports associations, youth, and education. Insurgent effort was mainly directed toward thwarting these efforts, many of which have already been described in the previous section.

Repression Is Used When Norwegians Refuse To Cooperate

The resistance of the Norwegians to nazification and Germanization led the occupation authorities to use threats, enact repressive measures, and exact reprisals, even though they would theoretically have preferred voluntary cooperation. Threatening recalcitrant Norwegians with deprivation of their food ration cards often brought them to terms. Fines were levied on both a collective and individual basis. The death penalty was instituted for a number of offenses, such as assisting the enemy, listening to foreign broadcasts, and sabotaging industry.

In March 1941, the Nasjonal Samling party was given a free hand against anti-Quisling Norwegians; no legal proceedings would be allowed against members. After riots following German arrests of the families of young men who had fled to England in August 1941, the Germans proclaimed a state of emergency in Aalesund. In September, German authorities

countered Norwegian strikes and pro-British demonstrations in Oslo by proclaiming a state of emergency. Two prominent labor leaders were executed, and mass arrests and deportations followed. In April 1942, the Germans destroyed 334 buildings at Telvaag in retaliation for the shooting and death of two German policemen there.³¹

Economic difficulties caused by German exploitation of the Norwegian economy aggravated Norwegian unrest, particularly after the winter of 1941-42. In the 10-month period ending in October 1942, reprisals included about 150 persons executed and almost 4,000 arrested or deported. In August 1943, Norwegian response to the labor draft was so negative that not only was the Oslo chief of police shot for refusing to enforce the conscription, but Norwegian police and paramilitary units were placed under direct German military control. Former Norwegian army officers were arrested and sent to concentration camps. Oslo University was closed in December because Norwegians were resisting Quisling's introduction of political tests as a condition of entrance. Sixty-five professors and 1,500 students were arrested; of the latter, nearly 400 were deported and about 500 were sent to concentration camps.³²

Conditions were to get worse before they improved. Before the end of 1944, Terboven had asked Hitler for authority to make Norwegian employees and their relatives responsible for sabotage occurring in shipbuilding plants and subject to being shot if it occurred. Imprisonment, Terboven noted, did not frighten the Norwegian, who expected Germany's imminent defeat: It "gives him on the one hand security and, on the other hand, an alibi with the émigré government [in London]."³³ He also proposed to introduce German workers, overseers, and technicians into the Norwegian dockyards to combat the sabotage.*

But in Norway Nazi Methods Are Restrained

Nevertheless, on the whole and particularly in comparison with their activities elsewhere, the Nazis in Norway exercised restraint in executing and imprisoning Norwegians. In all, approximately 40,000 Norwegians were arrested and put in prisons or concentration camps in Norway. The average sentence was one and a half years, although some were three to four or more in length. Conditions in the camps, furthermore, were not so severe as in other parts of Europe. Over 7,000 Norwegians were sent as prisoners to Germany—1,150 regular prisoners of war, 650 students, and 5,400 political prisoners.

Torture was also employed in Norway, but not so extensively as in other countries. Beating of arrested persons with sticks or rubber truncheons was apparently permitted in 1941, the use of calf-pinchers came later, and cold baths (proved "effective" in France) were introduced

*It is not known whether permission was granted for these purposes.

after 1944. It is reported that a total of 2,100 Norwegians lost their lives* by German action—336 executed and approximately 1,800 dead from starvation, illness, and maltreatment.³⁴

Questions Concerning Quisling's Usefulness to the Germans

It has been suggested that the Germans made a single mistake in utilizing Quisling and the Nasjonal Samling as their instrument.³⁵ He was unpopular with Norwegians before the war and hated after his traitorous activity in April 1940. The use of Quisling, in this view, crystallized Norwegian opposition to the Germans and cut down the possibility of their finding a more popular collaborative Norwegian government.

The opposite view was put forth by none other than Admiral Raeder, who claimed that "Terboven also sabotaged Quisling . . . by making it extremely difficult for him and even discredited him among the population."³⁶ The nazification decrees, labor conscription, and the military draft were vastly unpopular with the Norwegian people. These steps were all intensified after Quisling took over in 1942. Whether Quisling was forced into these acts or whether he undertook them willingly is possibly beside the point: Quisling's unpopularity forced him to maintain his position by being of use to the Germans.

As a result, Quisling faced not only further unpopularity among the Norwegians, but also a split between moderates and extremists within the Nasjonal Samling. By 1943 there were rumors of these difficulties—resignations from the NS were forbidden in November 1942; in 1944, three Quisling ministers left the government and Quisling himself was challenged by Jonas Lie, whose more efficient ruthlessness better suited the Germans. That year, many NS members, forced out by the extremists, fled to Sweden, eager to escape both the resistance and their erstwhile confederates. When NS members between the ages of 18 and 45 were made subject in September 1944 to military service within Norwegian borders, large numbers of Quislingites took to the woods. Thus Quisling was rejected finally, not only by the Norwegian people and by his German masters, but even by members of his own party.³⁷

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

The insurgency-counterinsurgency phase of the Norwegian experience lasted until the German surrender at Rheims on May 7, 1945, brought the war in Europe to an end. Milorg's 40,000 troops

*The fate of an additional 1,400 Norwegian Jews, which was settled in late 1942, was not the result of any counterinsurgent strategy but of the implementation of Nazi race theories and may be regarded as part of the nazification process. Norwegian Jews were barred from certain professions in October 1940, they were registered in June 1942, many were arrested in September, their property was confiscated in October, and those still left—said to be about 750—were deported in November to Germany or Poland, where concentration camps and gas chambers awaited them. Thirteen are reported to have returned to Norway after the war. (International Military Tribunal, Trials of the Major War Criminals, XXXIX, 212; Chilton, p. 539, n. 3.)

accepted the surrender of the 400,000 German troops occupying fortified positions in Norway, and the King and the Nygaardsvold government-in-exile returned immediately from London.³⁸

A Review of German Aims and Their Lack of Success

That German tactics in Norway were effective up to a point cannot be denied. For the bulk of the Norwegian population was sufficiently cowed that most refrained from any overt anti-Nazi action. Movement of the population was restricted, and most people remained at home and waited for news;³⁹ but the record of the five years indicates clearly that the counterinsurgency strategy never did more than keep a lid on a pot that simmered constantly. The Germans achieved their minimum objective of occupying Norway, but had little or no success in attaining their larger ambition of converting Norwegians to nazism.

In retrospect, the Germans, whose policies in Norway were originally moderate and not particularly repressive, were caught in a downward spiral as they tried to utilize an unpopular indigenous government to carry out their designs. Quisling, always a weak reed, proved totally impotent as resistance rose and as evidence of Germany's impending military defeat increased. Preventive counterinsurgency of a positive nature, such as the nazification measures, then had to give way to more punitive measures, which in turn aroused ever greater resistance. The Germans threw away whatever chance they might have had to bring the Norwegians into their own sphere by acting through an agent who evoked only a negative response among his countrymen. Hatred of Quisling unified the Norwegian people and, since Quisling exemplified the German will, hatred of him also came to mean hatred of the Germans. Thus the primary lesson of the German experience in Norway is one generally applicable in many situations—the use of an unpopular collaborator may be more harmful to the counterinsurgent force than none at all.

Postwar Cleaning Up and Reconstruction

The first task of the Norwegians, once the Germans had surrendered, was to dispose of the occupation regime. Terboven and his Gestapo chief Rediess committed suicide, as did Jonas Lie, the Quisling Minister of Police.⁴⁰ Quisling and most of his associates were arrested by Milorg. War crimes trials were virtually the first order of business when the royal government returned. They proceeded strictly in accord with Norwegian law; and Quisling and his intimates were convicted of treason and executed. All that now remains of Quisling's efforts is his name, today a synonym for "a traitor, especially one who becomes the tool of the conqueror of his country."

The wartime government-in-exile resigned immediately after its return from London. Einar Gerhardsen, wartime mayor of Oslo and an important figure in the resistance, became Prime Minister. The Home Front was heavily represented in the new government, and even

today there are many individuals active in Norwegian politics whose status has been enhanced by their earlier role in the resistance. All Norwegians who had been members of the NS or of Nazi-associated organizations lost all rights of citizenship and became—at least for a time—virtually outcasts in their homeland, both legally and socially. The government moved quickly to clear up the human debris of the war, shipping home all German troops during the summer of 1945 (after requiring them to clear the minefields they had laid, a technique used widely throughout Europe after the German surrender). Also repatriated were the 35,000 slave laborers the Nazis had brought to Norway from other countries in Europe.⁴¹

In Norway as elsewhere, the Nazis left economic and social chaos in their wake. Terboven had systematically looted the country of money, foodstuffs, and other economic goods. The Norges bank was virtually empty and Norway's credit almost exhausted. Production of food, textiles, machinery, and almost all necessities of life was drastically reduced by Nazi depredations. Epidemic disease, which prewar Norway had virtually stamped out, was again rampant. As a result of the Finnmark campaign, the northern part of the country was virtually uninhabitable.⁴²

Nevertheless, the Nazis and Quisling furthered Norway's political evolution by shattering the dream of neutrality and intra-Scandinavian collaboration as the chief bases of Norwegian policy. The London government-in-exile had made it clear throughout the war that postwar Norway would identify itself with the larger world, and the postwar government made good on that pledge. Today Norway is an active member of the community of Western states. Without the direct wartime experience of life under Hitler, Terboven, and Quisling, Norway might never have made this fundamental reorientation in policy.

NOTES

¹Basic contemporary data on wartime Norway, full of the flavor of the time and prepared by authors still feeling the impact of invasion, defeat, and occupation, may be found in two wartime publications upon which this study has drawn: Norway: A Handbook, prepared by the Royal Norwegian Information Office (London: J. M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1942), and Norway Civil Affairs Handbook (London: Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, 1944).

²Franz Borkenau, World Communism, A History of the Communist International (Ann Arbor: Paperbacks for the Study of Communism and Marxism; University of Michigan Press, 1962), p. 261.

³See S. Clark Choffy, "The Foreign Policy of the Norwegian Government in Exile, 1940-1945" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The American University, 1961); see also G. H. Gathorne-Hardy, Norway and the War (London: Oxford University Press, 1941), pp. 14-27.

⁴Viscount Chilston, "The Occupied Countries in Western Europe: Norway," in Arnold Toynbee and Veronica M. Toynbee (eds.), Hitler's Europe (Survey of International Affairs, 1939-1946) (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), p. 538.

⁵Ibid., p. 539.

⁶Some sources go as high as 98 percent. See, for example, Norway: A Handbook, pp. 63ff.

⁷See Amanda Johnson, Norway, Its Invasion and Occupation (Decatur, Ga.: The Bowen Press, 1948), for a detailed account of Home Front activities in all phases.

⁸See March of Times Series, Men of Norway: Norwegian Journalist (London: Pilot Press, 1944), pp. 27-40.

⁹The selectivity of Norwegian sabotage efforts is described in Roy Walker, A People Who Loved Peace: The Norwegian Struggle Against Nazism (London: Victor Gollancz, 1946), pp. 94ff.

¹⁰Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," pp. 541-42.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 538, 541-42.

¹²Quoted from The Times (London) of June 5, 1944, cited in Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," p. 543.

¹³Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," n. 4, p. 539; for quotation, see The Royal Norwegian Government, Preliminary Report on Germany's Crimes Against Norway (Oslo, 1945), trans. and extracted as Doc. 079-UK in International Military Tribunal (IMT), Trial of the Major War Criminals (Nuremberg: IMT, 1949), XXXIX, 210.

¹⁴See Choffy, "Foreign Policy of the Norwegian Government in Exile," chs. III-V, for an analysis of this relationship.

¹⁰Dik Lehmkuhl, Journey to London: The Story of the Norwegian Government at War (London: Hutchinson and Co., Ltd., 1947), pp. 122-24.

¹¹Philip Paneth, Hakon VII: Norway's Fighting King (London: Alliance Press, Ltd., 1944), pp. 95-98.

¹²Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," p. 546; and Lehmkuhl, Journey to London, p. 124.

¹³See Margret Boveri, Treason in the Twentieth Century, tr. Jonathan Steinberg (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1963), pp. 64-79, for a discussion of Quisling's personality, motivation, and aims.

¹⁴Quoted in Boveri, Treason in the Twentieth Century, p. 69.

¹⁵See Raeder testimony, in IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XIV, 92-93.

¹⁶See Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," pp. 534-38, for events between April 9, 1940, and February 1, 1942.

¹⁷International Military Tribunal, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XIV, 100, for Raeder's testimony at trials.

¹⁸Terboven, quoted in The Times, October 6, 1941, cited in Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," n. 6, p. 540.

¹⁹Quisling, quoted in Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," n. 1, p. 538.

²⁰Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," p. 543.

²¹Norway: A Handbook, pp. 56-59.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., pp. 46ff.

²⁴Quoted in Norway: A Handbook, pp. 59-60.

²⁵These and other moves are analyzed in Norway: A Handbook, pp. 56, 64, 78-79. See also Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," p. 537 and n. 5, p. 540; and Clifton J. Child, "The Political Structure of Hitler's Europe—Administration," in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe, p. 120.

²⁶Norway: A Handbook, pp. 63-80; Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," text and n. 1 and n. 4, p. 540; and Royal Norwegian Government, Preliminary Report, in IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XXXIX, 214.

²⁷Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," pp. 540, 542.

²⁸Terboven, undated report to Hitler, reproduced as Doc. 870-PS in IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XXVI, 388.

²⁹Royal Norwegian Government, Preliminary Report, in IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XXXIX, 212; Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," n. 1, p. 544; and interview, October 10, 1963, with Mr. E. Haslund-Halvorsen of Oslo, an inmate of a large Norwegian camp for nearly three years.

³⁶Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," pp. 535-36.

³⁸Quoted in IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XIV, 101.

³⁷Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," pp. 542, 544-45.

³⁸Lehmkuhl, Journey to London, pp. 124-35.

³⁹Interview, October 10, 1963, with Mrs. Ebba Haslund of Oslo, who spent the occupation years in a small Norwegian town under German rule. A prominent literary figure today, she began writing during those years of enforced inactivity.

⁴⁰Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," p. 546.

⁴¹Johnson, Norway, pp. 444-52.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 223-26; and Royal Norwegian Government, Preliminary Report, in IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XXXIX, 214.

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Chapter Nine

**POLAND
1939-1944**

by James L. Kirkman



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When there developed a widespread and well-organized resistance to challenge the Nazi "New Order" in Poland, the German occupiers countered with collective punishment and special military tactics; they were successful to the extent that insurgent military capability was contained and only the Soviet military advance was able to dislodge the Nazis from the country.

BACKGROUND

The name Poland derives from the Slavic word pole, meaning "field," an appropriate description of the country since 90 percent of the country's terrain is flat or rolling. Elevation seldom exceeds 1,000 feet above sea level. In 1939 Poland comprised an area of some 141,075 square miles, equivalent in size to the state of Montana, and almost every section was inhabited. It was traversed by transportation routes, but vehicular movement was difficult in the forests and marshes in the northern part of the country. With the richest soil, the best drainage, and the most mineral deposits, southern Poland was more developed both agriculturally and industrially than the north.

Of Poland's 1939 population of about 35 million, approximately 10 million persons lived in urban areas—Warsaw alone had about 1.25 million residents. Most of the population belonged to one of three ethnic groups: there were about 24.5 million ethnic Poles, 3.5 million Ukrainians, and 3 million Jews. Of the remaining 4 million, about 700,000 were Germans. Unfortunately, antagonisms within and among these groups hampered social cohesion in interwar Poland and later precluded a fully unified resistance to the Nazi occupation. In the interwar period both the Ukrainians and Jews had their own political parties to express their cultural and, in the case of the Ukrainians, national separatist aspirations.¹

Political Activities and Views of Ethnic Poles

Discord also existed among the ethnic Poles. This gave rise in the 1920's to numerous party factions, fluid party coalitions, and frequent ~~turnovers~~ ^{changes} in government. In 1926, however, control of both houses of the parliament passed to the authoritarian-oriented Non-Party Bloc, and the president of the Republic was made a virtual dictator. The Non-Party Bloc, dominant

during the 1930's, fostered anti-Semitism, passed electoral laws unfavorable to all ethnic minorities, frequently imprisoned opposition leaders, and increased the influence of the military in national affairs. The four major parties—the Peasant party, the Socialist party, the Christian Democratic party, and the Nationalist party—were excluded from the government. They boycotted some elections, but organized no subversive activity.²

In spite of their differences, ethnic Poles were united in two important respects. First, they were almost unanimous in withholding support from the Polish Communist Party, whose membership reportedly totaled around 8,000, although some estimates are higher.³ One reason is that the party was opposed by the vigorous and influential Polish Catholic Church. Also, because of the party's pro-Soviet orientation and activities during the Polish-Soviet War of 1920-21, it was distrusted by most Poles.*⁴ Second, practically all ethnic Poles were fervent nationalists. They had gained independence in 1918 after more than 100 years of nationalistic agitation and occasional outbreaks, and resistance to a foreign occupier was part of the folklore. Contemporary Poles had acquired some knowledge of insurrectionary techniques through acquaintance with Polish classical literature and nonfiction accounts of past Polish insurrections and, in a few instances, through personal participation in resistance activities before 1918.⁵

Germans Occupy Poland in Two Stages and Divide It Three Ways

In September-October 1939 Poland was overrun by the Germans, and top government and opposition leaders fled to France as the Nazi German occupation began. At first the Nazis occupied only the western half of the country, the Soviets having moved into the eastern part in September 1939, after prior agreement with the Germans. In their half, the Germans detached the four westernmost Polish provinces, plus some Polish territory around East Prussia, and incorporated them into the Reich. This area contained roughly 10 million inhabitants, 650,000 of whom were ethnic Germans. The remaining four Polish provinces under German control in 1939 were placed under the personal rule of the German Reich's Law Leader, Hans Frank II, and eventually termed the General Government. The 1939 population of this area was approximately 12 million, of whom 60,000 to 75,000 were ethnic Germans.

After the German attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941 the former Soviet zone of Poland also came under German occupation. One part was incorporated into the Reich, another was included in the General Government, and the remainder was treated as part of either the Reich Commissariat for the "East Land" or the Reich Commissariat for the Ukraine.†⁶

*Ironically, Polish Communists in the interwar period were considered too nationalistic by the Soviets. In 1937-38 Stalin conducted a purge of the Polish Communist Party's leadership, and in 1938 the Comintern formally announced the dissolution of the party. It was not reconstituted until early 1942, and then as the Polish Workers Party.

†Since little is known about Nazi policy or countermeasures vis-à-vis the Poles in the Commissariats, this paper will not cover activities in these areas.

Nazi Racial Theories Denigrate Poles

The Poles had little working in their favor as the occupation began. They had been classified by the Nazis as Untermenschen, or subhumans, and were unlucky enough to occupy land previously marked by Nazi ideologues as destined to receive the first wave of German colonizers sent out to alleviate the German lebensraum problem. And the Nazi Fuehrer Adolf Hitler's directions to Frank in early October 1939, as recorded by Martin Bormann,* sealed the Poles' fate:

The Poles are especially born for low labor . . . there can be no question of improvement for them. . . . The Poles are lazy and it is necessary to use compulsion to make them work. . . . The Government General should be used by us merely as a source of unskilled labor . . . the Polish gentry must cease to exist . . . wherever they are, they must be exterminated; there should be one master only for the Poles—the German; . . . all representatives of the Polish intelligentsia are to be exterminated. This sounds cruel, but such is the law of life. [Priests will] preach what we want them to preach. If any priest acts differently, we shall make short work of him. The task of the priest is to keep the Poles quiet, stupid, and dull-witted.⁷

Hitler's words, though directed in this case to Frank in the General Government, were just as relevant for Nazi officials in the annexed provinces, for all Poles were subject to this overall policy. However, there was a certain amount of differentiation in the treatment of Poles in the two parts, and this followed from the unique role assigned to each. Since the incorporated area was made an integral part of the Reich and settled immediately by ethnic Germans, it underwent the most intense and unbending "Germanization." In the General Government section, the suppression and regulation of Polish life was slightly less severe but was certainly greater than in most other Nazi-occupied areas of Europe: it never had a puppet government, it was designated as an area of future German colonization, it was relegated and kept to the economic function of merely providing cheap labor and foodstuffs, and it was subjected to persistent and almost unmatched hardships and liquidations. The area was often referred to in German releases as "the Reich's own land."

Hans Frank, Ruler of the General Government Area

In Cracow, Governor General Frank worked with unlimited powers and complete loyalty to implement this policy, assisted directly by four district governors and a higher SS leader attached to his office. At first Frank's rule was indeed almost sovereign. He was responsible only to Hitler, and his sway was recognized by all Nazi officials in both the Reich proper and the General Government. One German observer accurately described the situation in those early days: "Frank was carrying on like a megalomaniacal pasha . . . he let nobody interfere, but ruled like a sovereign. . . ."⁸ And his policy was equally clear cut. A day after Hitler's

* Bormann was Hitler's party deputy, not to be confused with the Fuehrer's designated heir, Hermann Goering.

pronouncement on the Poles, Frank declared to an army official that "Poland shall be treated as a colony; the Poles shall be the slaves of the Greater German World Empire."⁹

The man who justified his boast was, in a number of respects, a Nazi archetype. He was a charter member of the Nazi party, having joined in 1920 at the end of his legal studies. The young Frank's star rose rapidly and he was soon the party's legal expert, able eventually to reinstate his father, a lawyer bearing the same name, who had lived a troubled life and been expelled from the bar for embezzlement. Somewhat exceptional for an early Nazi, Frank was not only well versed in the law but also well acquainted with literature and the fine arts, especially music. He apparently had a witty side and some skill in conversational repartee, even in Italian. An American journalist who knew him felt that Frank's personality made him one of the least repulsive of the top Nazis. Frank was also known in party circles as energetic, Jew-hating, and completely devoted to Hitler.

After acting as the party's defense lawyer in a number of trials during the Weimar period, including the celebrated trial in 1930 at which Hitler himself put in a strategic appearance, Frank went on in the Third Reich to become the Bavarian Minister of Justice and subsequently a Reich Minister Without Portfolio, Reich Commissioner of Justice, President of the Academy of Law and of the German Bar Association, and overall Reich Law Leader. Though he was a lawyer (specifically a barrister), Frank was not constrained by consideration for legal precedents and the rule of law. As he had explained to jurists in 1936, "There is no independence of law against National Socialism. Say to yourselves at every decision which you make: 'How would the Fuehrer decide in my place?'"¹⁰

At the time of his appointment as Governor General at the age of 39, Frank continued with his other already impressive duties. Equally important was ~~the fact~~ that he was also a member of the inner core of the party, the twenty-member Central Directorate (Oberste Reichsleitung).¹¹ His appointment as Governor General clearly indicated the importance attached to that region of Poland. As for the Poles, Frank asserted to subordinates in December 1940,

The Pole here must feel that we are not building for him a State with a rule of law, but that he has one single duty—namely, to work and to be meek. Evidently this sometimes leads to difficulties, but in your own interest you must see to it that all measures be taken ruthlessly, in order to master all this. You can absolutely rely on me. . . .¹²

Suppression of Polish Political and Intellectual Life

The impact of the German policy on the Polish population was immediate, drastic, and pervasive. By the end of the first year changes were introduced in all spheres of activity, and Dr. Frank and his district governors announced to the Poles that henceforth and "forever" they would live under German "protection." In the annexed area all Poles were expelled from public office, and in the General Government part all Polish officials above the municipal, ghetto, and commune levels were dismissed. Those who were allowed to remain in office in the 1,148 municipalities

and in the other local units were closely supervised by the Governor General's district leaders or local commissioners. In the incorporated area all Polish courts were abolished. Although Polish courts were permitted to function in the General Government section, they were restricted to handling nonpolitical cases involving only Poles.¹³

In implementing Hitler's October 1939 directives, the object of Polish education under the occupation became not the spreading of knowledge and theoretical learning but rather the creation of skilled workers in agriculture and industry. Except for some Ukrainians, Polish citizens in both parts were barred from universities, but they were allowed to attend elementary and vocational schools. In this way, a vast skilled-labor pool was to be developed for use by the Reich.¹⁴

Polish intellectuals were systematically imprisoned or otherwise eliminated. In November 1939, more than 200 teachers and assistants at Jagiellonian University in Cracow were arrested. Fourteen died in prison and others died from the effects of imprisonment. Similar treatment took the lives of other Polish professors, including 65 at the University of Poznan.¹⁵

Other actions were taken to suppress Polish culture and self-expression. The occupation authorities confiscated privately owned radios, while selected news items and official announcements were made public through loud speakers. Polish newspapers in the incorporated area were closed and those in the General Government part were brought under censorship. Towns in the annexed provinces were given new German names and use of the Polish language in schools or on signs was forbidden.¹⁶ In the General Government section, Polish legitimate theaters were closed and movie theaters were restricted to showing trivial films or those depicting the greatness of Germany. In this area, publication of any book, journal, diary, or music was prohibited; and Polish bookshops were forbidden to sell books on world affairs or politics.¹⁷

German Economic Policies for Poland

Furthermore, Dr. Frank, this time as a regional official of the Reich's Four-Year Plan—the Nazis never tired of devising new positions and bewildering organizational patterns—implemented measures to eliminate Poles from managerial or entrepreneurial jobs and to relegate the nation to the role of providing cheap labor and foodstuffs for the Reich. The first step entailed not only the expulsion of numerous Poles from their jobs but also the confiscation of banks and industrial property and the closing of many commercial firms. By April 1944, in the commercial sector alone, the process of "rationalizing" the economy had closed about 100,000 out of 130,000 establishments in one section of the annexed part and about 152,000 out of 203,000 retail and wholesale concerns in areas controlled by the General Government.¹⁸ Moreover, factories, machinery, and enterprises seized by the General Government were often dismantled and shipped to Germany. According to Hermann Goering* in October 1939, this physical transfer of property

*Goering wore several hats too. He was then Hitler's designated successor, a field-marshal, and the delegate for the Four-Year Plan.

was to include all facilities not considered "absolutely essential for the maintenance at a low level of the bare existence of the inhabitants." ¹⁹

The Poles were forced to produce foodstuffs for export to Germany, a requirement that created great hardship. By September 1941, the Poles in the General Government region were reduced to a bare subsistence level. In that month a medical officer informed Frank that the health of the population had deteriorated because most of them were consuming only 600 calories a day. In 1942 malnutrition reportedly approached famine proportion, yet Frank in that year committed the General Government to increase the deliveries of bread grains to Germany by a half million tons. Poles in the incorporated area probably received a slightly larger food ration, perhaps 10 percent more. ²⁰

Deportation of Forced Labor

The next step, and the one that caused much fright and a greater degree of misery, was the deportation of Poles for forced labor in Germany. In the General Government section, the use of coercion to obtain workers was made official around April 1940. A common procedure thereafter was to cordon off an area and take almost everyone found within the cordon. The raids occurred during day or night and seemed to hit randomly. At times, though, the Governor General may have urged his men to discriminate and seek mainly those in nonessential work or those deemed to be idle. Dr. Frank certainly had been advised that the procedure as followed was "wild and ruthless" and had "badly shaken the feeling of security of the inhabitants." ²¹

According to German records, by August 1942, 800,000 workers had been sent to Germany from the General Government; by December 1942, 940,000; by June 1943, 1,250,000. An additional 200,000 persons had probably been shipped eastward to Nazi-occupied Russia by the end of 1942. ²² From the incorporated part alone, perhaps 2 to 3 million Poles were forcibly shipped to the farms and factories of the Reich by early 1944. ²³

Resettlement of Poles To Accomplish "Germanization" of Poland

A great number of Poles were dislocated by resettlement programs organized for political and racial reasons. Reichsfuehrer SS Heinrich Himmler organized this program, acting in his capacity as the Reich Commissioner for the strengthening of Germanism. Himmler assigned high priority to populating the annexed area of Poland with German workers and farmers and moving out the "foreign races." Accordingly, some one to two million Polish citizens in the incorporated part, including most of the area's Jews, were moved east to the General Government region and were replaced by a somewhat larger number of ethnic Germans settlers. Many, perhaps most, of these deportations occurred during the winter of 1939-40 in weather near 40 degrees below zero. The deportees reportedly were given a day's warning and allowed to take with them a few portable objects. Frank commented that the deportees were not being provided

with food or clothing and that any disturbances would be met with the strictest methods. Later, he remarked that the trains arrived in the General Government area with some cars "overflowing with corpses."²⁴

Some Poles in the General Government section were also displaced by ethnic German settlers brought there by the "Germanization" program. There were two resettlement programs. The main one was carried out in the winter of 1942-43 around Zamosc and the other in the summer of 1943 around Lublin. In the Zamosc operation alone, 30,000 to 40,000 ethnic Germans were brought in and about 50 percent of the area's native peasants were displaced. Displaced Polish families were broken up, strong members being sent to work in Germany. The Zamosc operation took place on short notice in midwinter. According to Nazi records, such displacement operations resulted in considerable loss of life.²⁵

A resettlement program in reverse separated "racially good" Polish children from their parents and transported them to Germany to be reared as Germans. An estimated 100,000 to 200,000 children were taken to Germany during the occupation.²⁶

"Special" Treatment for Jews

Special racial treatment was reserved for the Jews. Heinrich Himmler and his deputy Reinhard Heydrich were in charge of this particularly gruesome and difficult aspect of the occupation. Frank lent his full support and urged the cooperation of his staff, remarking at a top level meeting in December 1941, "As far as the Jews are concerned, I want to tell you quite frankly that they must be done away with in one way or another. . . . Gentlemen, I must ask you to rid yourself of all feeling of pity. We must annihilate the Jews."²⁷

Most of the 650,000 to 1,000,000 Polish Jews living in the annexed area had been deported to the General Government part, probably in the general 1939-40 deportations of "foreign races" from the incorporated area. In December 1941, just before the extermination program began, Jews in the General Government area probably numbered about 3.5 million,* concentrated in the ghettos of large cities and forbidden to leave under penalty of death. The Jewish ghetto of Warsaw, an area of about 100 square blocks, was enclosed by an eight-foot wall. Inside, as many as 15 persons lived in each room, the electricity was cut off at night, and the food ration fixed at 4.5 pounds of bread per month.²⁸

The evacuation of the ghettos and extermination of the Jews in Poland began in the spring of 1942, when the Nazis announced that the Jews were being transported to work in the east. In addition to the Jews put to death in extermination camps, many must have died of starvation or illness. The emptying of the Warsaw ghetto, the first night of which saw the indiscriminate

* Roughly a half million of these were non-Polish Jews who had been brought by the Nazis from other occupied countries.

shooting of numerous Jews in their apartments, began in July 1942. At this time there were about 400,000 inhabitants in the ghetto. The regular evacuations were stopped in September 1942, leaving about 80,000 inhabitants in the ghetto, but were resumed in January 1943. By April 1943, when the ghetto uprising began, the ghetto population had been reduced to around 60,000. By January 1944, most Polish Jews had been exterminated. At that time Frank reported that only 100,000 out of 3,500,000 Jews were left in the General Government area.²⁹ This extermination program was not a matter of counterinsurgency but of Nazi racial policy.

INSURGENCY

The indigenous resistance that began immediately after Poland's defeat in September-October 1939 was at first largely uncoordinated. It consisted principally of minor acts of propaganda, sabotage, and sniping by individuals or by small, short-lived groups with such romantic names as "The Avengers."³⁰ There were also some Jewish units engaged in smuggling Jews from the Nazi zone to the Soviet zone.

Early Resistance Organisation Is Formed Mainly by Ethnic Poles

Within six months, however, nationwide underground organizations developed. Significantly, the main ones developed within the framework of the army and of the four major prewar political parties—the Christian Democratic, Nationalist, Peasant, and Socialist parties.³¹ This fact revealed both the basic strength and weakness of the insurgent movement at this stage. On the positive side, the course taken by these elements meant that almost all organizations representing non-Communist ethnic Poles, roughly 70 percent of the total population, were united at least in their common determination to resist the occupation. It is significant in this respect that no group produced at this time or later a major collaborator—a result both of the Polish attitude and lack of a serious German attempt to find one.

On the other hand, nonethnic Poles representing the rest of the population engaged at this time in mainly passive resistance or none at all. Jewish leaders in the first three years largely restricted their illegal activities to those designed to preserve Jewish culture and education: some forbidden schools were maintained, news and information sheets were secretly distributed, and records of Nazi activities and Jewish scholarly endeavors were clandestinely stored.³² This relatively isolated and passive course of the Jews in the ghettos probably resulted from their unpleasant experience with Polish anti-Semitism before the war, the lack of outside aid, their relative freedom within the ghettos, and their extreme vulnerability to Nazi reprisals.

Practically no resistance came from the Ukrainian-Poles or the Polish Communists in the first year or two. Most Ukrainians lived in the Soviet zone and did not come under German control until the latter half of 1941, and even after they came under Nazi administration they

received relatively favorable treatment. Also the anti-Soviet sentiment of many Ukrainians predisposed many to cooperate with the Germans. Reasons for cooperation gradually diminished during the occupation, however, and many Ukrainians in Poland did engage in resistance, though they were never integrated into the resistance movement of the ethnic Poles. At first, Polish Communists remained inactive, not only because of the treaty of nonaggression and cooperation between the Nazi and Soviet governments, but also because of internal party disorganization. Not until January 1942, well after the German attack on the Soviet Union, did the Polish Communists reconstitute their party and begin resistance work. Their actual contribution throughout the occupation was generally minor, although they were able, through adroit propaganda, to get a lot of political mileage from their activities.³³

Insurgent Aims and Strategy

Among the ethnic Polish groups there developed by the spring of 1940 basic consensus concerning political aims and insurgent strategy. This was made possible by the emergence of the major political parties to dominance both within the government-in-exile, led by Gen. Wladyslaw Sikorski, and within the resistance movement in Poland. Rapport was good, since the groups embraced compatible nationalist and basic political orientations. Their aims were the maintenance of Polish nationhood and institutions in Poland, the liberation of the country from both the Nazis and Soviets, and the postwar establishment of a democratic non-Communist state.³⁴ This anti-Communist and anti-Soviet orientation proved to be crucial in its consequences, because the Poles, by both geography and the fortunes of war, were placed largely at the mercy of the Soviets in obtaining needed aid.

The Poles' strategy in early 1940 called for two phases of insurgent operations, an underground phase and a military phase. In the first, the government leaders in exile and the underground leaders in Poland would seek the support of Britain and France in establishing a secret underground "state" in Poland with functioning ministries and headed by a "government delegate." The leaders planned to unify the major insurgent groups by subordinating them to the general direction of the government delegate and the day-to-day coordination of a military officer designated by the government-in-exile. A unified movement would then conduct sabotage and intelligence activities to help the Allies and train secret militias for a future uprising. Furthermore, in Poland a secret council of the major-party heads would act as a parliament of sorts and nominate the man for the government delegate post, the official appointment to be made by the government-in-exile. This council would also administer the finances of the resistance and apportion appointments to secret "state" ministries.³⁵ In the military phase of the insurgency, a general uprising of the secret militias would be timed to coincide with a collapse of the German armies or the Nazi regime, provided that adequate external aid for the insurgents was assured.³⁶ No plans were made at this time for protracted guerrilla warfare.

Organisation and Leadership of the Polish "Home Army"

In 1940-41 the insurgents successfully implemented important aspects of their underground strategy with the formation of a skeleton underground "state" and a united administration for insurgent operations. The latter structure was comprised of the government delegate and his regional assistants, the military commander with his scattered network of subordinate army officers, and the major-party leaders and their council and local organizers. Unfortunately, it never operated smoothly, and rivalry between the political leaders and the military commander revived the old issue of political versus military influence in Polish life. Nevertheless, sufficient unity was achieved to permit the military commander to direct in Warsaw in 1944 a concerted insurrection led by a combined "Home Army," as the Polish-government-sponsored insurgents were eventually known collectively.³⁷

The top posts in the Polish resistance were held by a number of different persons, many of whom were of nominal importance as personalities. These were, however, the leaders responsible for day-to-day coordination of operations during the occupation. The second and third of the four military commanders achieved some renown by virtue of their central roles and long service. These were Gen. "Grot" Rowecki and Gen. Tadeusz "Bor" Komorowski, former colonels in the prewar Polish army. In London there was Prime Minister Wladyslaw Sikorski, perhaps the major Polish wartime figure. After his accidental death in July 1943, Sikorski was succeeded by the colorless but respected Stanislaw Mikolajczyk of the Peasant party.

Problems in Communication

The most serious organizational problem for the insurgents was the maintenance of networks in that area of Poland incorporated into the Reich. Controls there were so stringent and the eventual placement of Germans in Polish homes and neighborhoods so pervasive that the population and insurgents found it extremely difficult to engage in large-scale clandestine work in this area. Also, communication between insurgent leaders in Warsaw and their subordinates in the annexed area was tenuous because of heavy German patrolling along the border separating the General Government from the incorporated area. Consequently, after a few months of activity and many losses in personnel, the insurgent command decided to restrict operations in the Reich part and maintain there only a skeleton staff whose members had German physical features, German-language fluency, and documents attesting to their "German" nationality.³⁸ A similar organizational problem existed in the Soviet part of occupied Poland.

Insurgent Operations Occur Mainly in the General Government Area

Insurgent success was centered mainly in the nonincorporated sections of Poland, where underground and sabotage operations reached an impressive degree of sophistication and intensity in the years 1941-44. Underground "state" ministries succeeded in training a corps of

civil bureaucrats and operating secret schools for Polish children. A 10-court judicial system benched by professional jurists or lawyers tried 2,000 suspected collaborators and handed down 200 death sentences, duly carried out by a population-control section of the insurgent-operations administration. As for propaganda, 200,000 copies of leaflets, newspapers, and other materials were printed and distributed daily; and in Warsaw alone in the second half of 1944, 120,000 training manuals were published. Sabotage operations from January 1941 to July 1944 resulted in the destruction of an estimated 4,326 motor vehicles, 28 aircraft and 1,674 tons of fuel. In the same period 5,733 Germans are reported to have been killed, including both the Higher SS and Police Chief in Poland, and the Nazi director of the Labor Office.³⁹

By 1943-44 approximately 26 separate munitions shops were producing fully one-third of the insurgents' munitions, with stocks of self-manufactured flame-throwers and hand grenades totaling, in the spring of 1944, about 900 and 320,000 items respectively. A reception system was devised that handled drops from over 450 RAF flights. These drops supplied the insurgents with another third of their munitions and 353 special advisers. Intelligence operations were highly developed too. In the years 1942-44 about 300 radio-dispatched intelligence reports as well as a courier-dispatched intelligence summary were sent to London every month. And during all these years resistance membership continued to grow. Sworn members totaled 100,000 in 1941, 300,000 by mid-1943, and 380,000 by August 1944. Most of these members held regular jobs and were organized by occupations.⁴⁰

Jews Prepare To Resist Extermination

Before the Home Army moved up to its military operations phase, the Nazi genocide program prompted the Jews in Poland to engage in open warfare. The immediate cause was the ghetto evacuations, begun in early 1942. As a result of these, many Jews throughout Poland fled to the forests to organize partisan action or fought police in the ghettos.⁴¹ By far the most significant action occurred in the form of a general ghetto uprising in Warsaw in April-May 1943.

As early as the spring and summer of 1942, some Warsaw Jews reportedly carried out a few acts of sabotage and assassination, but serious organizational steps were taken only after the summer evacuations of the ghetto. In October 1942 young Jews of the German-run ghetto factories organized the Jewish Combat Organization (JCO) and began to plan armed resistance against future deportations. Most members were drawn from Zionist, Socialist, and Communist groups. Their leader was 24-year-old Mordechai Anielewicz, a Zionist with a journalistic background. The Jews' single and desperate aim was to make the ghetto evacuation, if and when it was resumed, as costly as possible for the Germans. Their quickly evolved strategy called for construction of suitable defensive positions, procurement of munitions, marshalling of popular ghetto support, and a last-ditch defense.⁴²

Between October 1942 and April 1943, which might be termed an underground phase, Jewish preparations progressed. Often under the guise of constructing the air-raid shelters ordered by occupation authorities, the Jews constructed many subterranean bunkers with interlocking passages and links with the sewers. These comprised both the key defensive positions and a system of lodging, transportation, and communication. When completed, the bunker system was quite elaborate—it contained at least 631 units. Entrances to these hideouts were usually well camouflaged and difficult to detect visually, and they led to rooms situated sometimes as much as seven feet below the ground. Many bunkers housed whole families and were equipped with washing facilities, toilets, and enough food for many weeks.⁴³

It is difficult to assess the Jews' success in obtaining munitions, particularly the quantities acquired. What is more certain is that their arms were mainly small-caliber weapons. According to some reports, the JCO received only 50 large pistols and 50 grenades from the Home Army; other sources believe that the Home Army supplied numerous revolvers, rifles, machine-guns, fuses, explosives, and 1,000 hand grenades. The Communists reportedly contributed 9 revolvers and 5 hand grenades. Most munitions were secured by black-market purchase, raids on German stocks, and self-manufacturing.⁴⁴

In the third area of preparation, the marshalling of popular support, JCO members undertook the distribution of numerous leaflets and entered into discussions and debates at ghetto meetings. They also liquidated several overzealous Jewish police, Gestapo agents, and collaborators. Before definite confirmation of the mass killings of Jewish men, women, and children reached the ghetto in April 1943, this psychological campaign had only limited results; after this date, however, popular support was much more readily given.⁴⁵

The Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto Begins on April 19, 1943

Preparations for resistance were not fully complete in January 1943 when the Germans resumed the evacuations, but a few JCO squads did successfully ambush a German patrol, killing 20 and causing the Nazi authorities to suspend evacuations temporarily. Final preparations were then made by the JCO—squads were drilled, lookouts were posted along the walls, etc.—and the Jews were ready for full-scale action on April 19, 1943, when the Germans re-entered the ghetto. On that day defensive operations began, with the ghetto defenders directing their fire on German patrols from barricades and roof-top positions.⁴⁶

Organized Jewish forces numbered between several hundred and a few thousand, divided into groups of from 20 to 30. The core of the forces were young people 18 to 25 years old. Many were women. In the ensuing battle, which lasted until mid-May, this force was scattered over an area of 100 square blocks. Except for some contingents of the Polish Workers Party, the Labor Zionists, and unsupervised bands, all insurgent groups were unified under JCO command. By and large the Jews fought alone, though Home Army, leftist, and Communist units of unknown size

reportedly helped at times by attacking German positions on the perimeter of the ghetto or fighting with Jewish units in the ghetto. Some help was also received from presumably unarmed Jews who infiltrated into the ghetto from the "Aryan" side after about two weeks of fighting.⁴⁷

The defenders' tactics involved both guerrilla-type offensive action and positional defensive warfare, with the latter being used increasingly as the German sweeps through the ghetto became more devastating. Offensive tactics were primarily confined to the first week of fighting, when the insurgents frequently ambushed the Germans from vantage points in the upper stories of buildings. Interconnecting passages between attics provided escape and communication routes. In the second week the main scene of battle apparently shifted to the bunkers, arms factories, and sewers, which were increasingly used by the insurgents for logistical purposes.

Throughout the struggle, high morale born of desperation was the main factor that sustained resistance. Although noncombatant inhabitants did surrender as the Germans advanced through the ghetto, the young fighters seldom gave up. Resistance was so unexpectedly stiff and enduring that German estimates of the duration of the uprising had to be revised more than once. But the JCO was fighting a losing battle. Its inadequate firepower and lack of defense against the German block-by-block burning of buildings proved decisive. After about four weeks of fighting, the Germans had completely crushed the Jews.⁴⁸

Deteriorating Relations Between the Home Army and the U.S.S.R.

It was also in 1943 that the Home Army began its military operations, though on a small scale. Some partisan units were formed around mid-year to absorb refugees who had sought security in the forests. These proceeded to attack German settlements newly implanted around Zamosc and to sabotage the logistical facilities servicing German troops in the Soviet Union.⁴⁹ These activities were limited, however, and did not constitute an insurgent move into military operations.

In the autumn of 1943 an increasingly difficult international situation led to a major modification of insurgent strategy. Since their victory at Stalingrad in 1942, the Soviets had assessed Home Army activities as essentially anti-Soviet in nature and had adopted a policy inimical to the interests of the Polish insurgents. They publicly attacked the "passive" policy of the Home Army, laid claim to eastern Poland, refused to enter talks leading to the coordination of Home Army and Red army operations, and—after the Katyn Forest massacres controversy* in the spring of 1943—broke off relations with the Polish government-in-exile and backed the formation of an exile Polish Communist government. By mid-1943, therefore, Polish leaders both in London and in Poland realized that they could not count on Red army support for a Polish uprising.⁵⁰

* See "Counterinsurgency" section for Nazi exploitation of this event, p. 268.

Planning for Military Operations

In this tense international atmosphere the TEMPEST plan was drawn up and adopted in late 1943. This plan called for a new, "quasi-military" phase entailing a buildup of partisan detachments behind the German eastern front, intensification of sabotage behind German lines, harassment of retreating German units, and occupation of evacuated or nearly abandoned localities in the line of advance of the Red army. Government-in-exile and insurgent leaders felt that stepped-up operations against the Germans were both feasible in view of the war situation and necessary in order to reassert Polish administration and counter Soviet charges that the Home Army was led by "pacifists." In the spring and summer of 1944 the plan was executed with some success. Home Army troops participated in the liberation of Wilno, Lwow, Lublin, and other towns. Reportedly, the greatest obstacle was not the retreating Germans but the Soviet NKVD, which often disarmed Home Army units and arrested and sometimes executed Home Army officers.⁵¹

The major deviation from the TEMPEST plan, and that which constituted the short "military" phase of the insurgency, was the Home Army-directed Warsaw insurrection of August-September 1944. The insurgents' decision to carry out a military operation was politically as well as militarily motivated. Politically, the insurrection would refute Soviet allegations of Home Army inactivity and secure the capital before the Soviets arrived; militarily, it would cut key German logistical lines leading through Warsaw and hasten a German defeat. According to General "Bor" Komorowski, Polish insurgents presupposed the continuation of the Red army offensive, which by July 1944 had brought advanced Soviet troops to within 10 miles of Warsaw. It was anticipated that the insurrection would have to be sustained for only a week or ten days, after which the Soviets would arrive.⁵²

Home Army Begins Warsaw Insurrection of 1944

The uprising began on August 1, 1944, with the insurgents donning identifying armbands and engaging in sharp and sustained offensive operations against German-held offices, public buildings, plants, bridges, etc. Home Army forces numbered about 40,000, including roughly 5,000 women who were mainly organized into messenger, propaganda, kitchen, medical, and mine-laying services. Subordinating themselves to the tactical direction of Home Army officers were 600 Polish Communist fighters and a battalion of other radical leftists. In addition, thousands of Warsaw citizens and nearby villagers lent their active support. Popular support for the uprising was unanimous and spontaneous.⁵³

Keyed up with enthusiasm and fighting against German forces of about equal numerical strength, the insurgents achieved their tactical objectives in the first week in spite of their inferior firepower. Within the first week about two-thirds of the city was in insurgent hands and the bridges across the Vistula leading to the German eastern front were cut off. The battle picture was that of isolated German strongpoints surrounded by insurgent-held blocks of

buildings, the latter in turn surrounded by German troops on the periphery. The insurgents were able to sustain offensive action and maintain control over most of the city until the final week of August, at which time their position began to weaken because of growing logistical problems. ⁵⁴

Two Problems: Logistics and Lack of Red Military Support

Logistics occupied much insurgent time and ingenuity. Openings were blasted between attics, cellars, and courtyards; and many sewers were lined with duckboards, ropes, ladders, and traffic controllers to provide a maze of passages that permitted the concealed passage of supplies and personnel. The main logistical problem, especially acute in September, was the depletion of ammunition and food stocks. A number of RAF drops and, after the second week in September, American and Soviet drops supplemented Home Army stocks of self-produced and captured German munitions, but reportedly these drops failed to supply the needed daily quota of five tons. A food and water shortage became especially critical in September, during which time numerous persons fainted from weakness or contracted dysentery and other diseases. This condition could be relieved only by a total liberation of the city, and here the actions of the Soviets proved decisive. ⁵⁵

In the first week of the uprising the Soviets brought their western offensive to a halt. For weeks thereafter, Home Army leaders, exile government leaders, and even President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill sought to persuade the Soviets to resume their ground and air advance in coordination with Home Army operations and to make U.S. flights to Warsaw possible by extending landing privileges at Soviet-held air bases 50 to 150 miles from Warsaw. ⁵⁶

These Western proposals met with little success. The Soviets maintained that a new concentration of Germans in Warsaw, brought about by the uprising, made an immediate takeover of that city impossible at the time and that a general German counterattack along the front was at the same time delaying the planned flanking of Warsaw. As for not extending landing rights to the Americans, the Soviets replied that they did not desire to associate themselves with an uprising which they regarded as an inopportune adventure. ⁵⁷

Around mid-September, however, the Soviets did give landing privileges to the British and Americans and also commenced their own nightly air drops. In addition they dispatched two battalions of untrained Polish troops recently drafted into the Red army. But the crucial factor was that the Red army did not resume its major offensive. An advance was made to the suburbs of Warsaw, but it stopped short of crossing the Vistula River.

Thus facing serious logistical problems and desperately needing outside reinforcements, the insurgents entered the final phase of the uprising in the last two weeks of September 1944. ⁵⁸

COUNTERINSURGENCY

Within the first year of the occupation of Poland, the Nazis must have fully recognized the measure of the occupation problem confronting them. Ethnic Poles were almost unanimous in their hostility and organized resistance was quickly emerging. The insurgents aimed at nothing less than the total liberation of Poland from foreign rule. Nazi policy, on the other hand, was to maintain total and continuing Nazi rule over the Poles and to relegate them to a servile economic role. Poland became especially important for the Nazis after they invaded the Soviet Union and, later, sought to sustain their hard-pressed armies on all fronts—from Poland the Nazis were extracting badly needed foodstuffs and manpower, and through Poland they were supplying their armies in the Soviet Union.

German Policy Accepts a Limited Degree of Insurgency in the General Government Area

In 1939-40 the Nazis embarked on a counterinsurgent program in both the annexed area and the General Government region, the objective of which was apparently to limit insurgent acts to certain "tolerable" limits. Subsequent Nazi action and statements imply that such limits were not exceeded so long as insurgent activities did not endanger the ethnic Germans settled among the Poles, especially in the annexed area, interrupt Nazi economic policy, or disrupt Wehrmacht operations on the eastern front. This is not to say that the Nazis envisaged no permanent solution to the insurgent problem. They apparently felt that the annexed area and the General Government area could be made completely secure only after Poles were displaced by Germans as the exclusive or majority "racial" stock. Indeed, such a displacement was partially executed in the annexed part during the war, and plans were laid for a similar displacement to be carried out in the General Government area after the war.⁵⁹

During the occupation, Dr. Frank took some half-hearted steps toward reform and pacification in the General Government area, but in essence the absence of a true pacification effort was the distinguishing feature of the Nazi counterinsurgent effort in both the incorporated and the General Government areas. The Nazis' lack of interest in reforms was clearly stated in a newspaper article written by a deputy of the Nazi party in the General Government. This high official publicly declared that the aim of the party was not to make the Poles "Nazi-minded" but to see that "leadership here is German . . . here the sun shines primarily for Germans."⁶⁰

In the incorporated part, Nazi control measures were extraordinarily stringent, in order to make the area safe for German settlers. Eventually, 1 to 3 million German farmers, bureaucrats, and other civilians were living and working among 5 to 7 million Poles in the annexed part. The Nazis apparently were able to place one or more German families in every block or neighborhood and to establish a pervasive, German-staffed "block-warden" system. Surveillance in the

annexed area was so intensive and arrests so frequent that the Polish insurgents were forced to abandon plans for building more than a skeleton underground network and had to confine their operations to petty sabotage. Indeed, it was difficult for them to maintain even an organized underground nucleus. In one district, five consecutive Home Army commanders were arrested in a period of two years. ⁶¹

In the neighboring General Government area, Hans Frank did not seek to maintain such a high degree of control. Indeed, this would have been impossible, since there were no more than 250,000 German civilians to administer between 14 and 18 million Poles. ⁶² Consequently, it was here that the insurgents were able to mount a serious challenge to the occupiers and tax German counterinsurgent efforts.

Security Forces Available in the General Government Area

Overall responsibility for the counterinsurgent program in the General Government area rested, of course, with the Governor General, but Reichsfuehrer SS Heinrich Himmler was vested with concurrent general responsibility, a factor which gave rise to tension between Frank and Himmler and to their subordinates in the General Government. In their counterinsurgent program in the General Government, these Nazi leaders relied mainly on German personnel: the Elite Guard (SS), Security Service (SD), Secret State Police (Gestapo), the Armed Forces (Wehrmacht), German gendarmes, and a special police force consisting of German males between 18 and 40 years old. ⁶³

A major exception to the use of German forces was the employment of Ukrainian, Latvian, and perhaps Lithuanian troops for ghetto guard duty. There was also the "Blue Police," a uniformed force of ethnic Poles, but its loyalties were uncertain, and the Germans restricted it mainly to patrolling and routine criminal investigation. Despite restrictions on its activities, many of its personnel aided insurgents by providing needed documents and transporting insurgent supplies under "official" cover. There were also Jewish policemen equipped with rubber truncheons who patrolled the ghettos. In the Warsaw ghetto there were 2,000 such policemen, who did much of the actual evacuation work in the summer of 1942. Their service was rewarded when most were themselves evacuated for extermination at the end of the summer. ⁶⁴

Drastic Steps To Prevent the Growth of Resistance

The control program implemented in the General Government section in 1939-40 was three-fold, consisting of preventive measures, an extensive psychological campaign, and measures for detection and containment of resistance action. One of the first preventive steps was taken in 1939 when Frank's officials ordered the Poles to have their 100- to 500-zloty bills specially stamped. They were allowed to keep only a certain amount of this stamped money, while any additional funds had to be deposited. This measure limited the availability of funds for insurgent

use. Another preventive step consisted of informing German officials in the General Government section that German men working there should be joined as soon as possible by their wives. This pointer, conveyed in a Nazi circular, implied that lonely Germans might be susceptible to the charms of women in the Polish resistance. The circular noted the extreme nationalism and resistance skill of Polish women and characterized them as "the most dangerous women in Europe."⁶⁵

The most drastic preventive measure was what was termed "extraordinary pacification" (Außerordentliche Befriedungsaktion). Governor General Frank, who apparently organized this step, described it:

The men capable of leadership whom we have found to exist in Poland must be liquidated. Those following them must . . . be eliminated in their turn. There is no need to burden the Reich and the Reich police organization with this. There is no need to send these elements to Reich concentration camps. . . .⁶⁶

The upshot was the arrest of some 3,500 to 4,000 persons and the immediate execution of about half. This surprise action took place in the first half of 1940, mainly in May and June and concurrent with the Nazi invasion of the Low Countries, when Frank expected world attention to be diverted. The victims included members of the intelligentsia, former politicians, landowners, clergymen, etc. — in short, any person deemed a likely leader of resistance. There is no doubt that many potential and actual underground leaders were liquidated at this time. Among those executed were the heads of the Peasant and Socialist parties.⁶⁷

Nazi Psychological Operations

In their psychological operations, which were constant during the occupation, the Nazis generally stressed three themes. One recurrent idea was German invincibility. The second was the German struggle against the Jews and, after June 1941, against the Communists. The third theme was German readiness to punish the Poles severely so long as any resistance continued.

When in the spring of 1943 the mass graves of over 10,000 murdered Polish army officers were found in the Katyn Forest near Smolensk, the Reich Minister of Propaganda, Dr. Goebbels, immediately saw the propaganda value of this discovery and noted that "We shall be able to live on it for a couple of weeks. . . . The Katyn incident is developing into a gigantic political affair which may have wide repercussions. We are exploiting it in every manner possible."⁶⁸ Every Nazi organ immediately charged the Soviets with responsibility for this massacre, and the International Red Cross was invited to investigate. In Poland this was the central propaganda theme for more than "a couple of weeks." Dr. Goebbels had several Polish intellectuals taken to the scene, and it is known that their reports were carefully studied by the Home Army. Nazi efforts undoubtedly paid off: the incident provided the pretext for the U. S. S. R. to sever relations with the Polish government-in-exile, and the Polish population and Home Army were undoubtedly alienated from the Soviets.

Not only did German propaganda, through its controlled mass media and posters, stress German readiness to punish any kind of resistance, but this theme was also brought forcibly and unmistakably to Polish attention through physical reprisals. In February 1940, Dr. Frank spoke of these reprisals to a German newsmen in terms indicating his early mastery of the situation: "I. for every seven executed Poles I wanted to hang out public announcements, then the forests of Poland would not suffice to produce the paper for such announcements."⁶⁸ Later, Frank became less self-assured.

Mass Reprisals as Both a Punitive and Preventive Measure

At times hostages were held in case an act of sabotage or other resistance occurred. There is some indication that Governor General Frank preferred to use only captured resistance persons as hostages,⁷⁰ but he appears not to have pressed this point. Consequently both captured insurgents and innocent citizens served as hostages. Persons were also selected at random--sometimes all residents of a block or a whole village population were rounded up and then either executed, imprisoned, or deported for acts of resistance committed in the locale by persons unknown.⁷¹ Reprisals were thus administered on a collective-responsibility basis in an effort to terrorize the general populace.

German officials felt that if reprisals were rigorous enough the majority of Poles would eventually seek a cessation of resistance activity; at the least, they expected terrorization to keep resistance within tolerable limits. Reprisals were conducted in an effort to force insurgent leaders to slacken their overt activities or, in one unsuccessful case, to prompt a Home Army leader, General "Bor" Komorowski, to surrender.⁷² Yet another reason was the German belief that mass executions could be used to obtain denunciations of underground members. In the period of most intense underground and quasi-military activity, from October 1943 to March 1944, the Germans conducted daily roundups of pedestrians and posted public notices that the arrested persons, whose names were listed, would be released if their families denounced an underground member. The following day, executions would take place. In this five-month period alone, some 15,000 Poles were executed, an average of 150 persons a day.⁷³ Still another reason for mass executions, specifically mentioned by Frank, was that the Nazis could not permit Germans to die without inflicting even greater losses on the Poles, in order to preserve the dominance of the German "racial strain."⁷⁴

Some Nazi Token Measures at "Pacification"

Although the Nazi psychological effort was mainly to terrorize, there were a few isolated attempts to get specific groups of Poles to do their bidding willingly, or even to drop certain programs causing trouble. During the evacuations of the Jewish ghettos in 1942, Nazi representatives used deception to try and convince suspicious and recalcitrant Jews that they were being

evacuated to work camps where they would receive humane treatment and their children would have schools and playgrounds.⁷⁵ In late 1943, Frank did intervene and manage to halt a resettlement program that had aroused enough resistance to threaten the security of the entire Lublin district. This program apparently had been initiated over Dr. Frank's head by Himmler and had caused the resignation of the Nazi governor of Lublin.

Dr. Goebbels' observations on this point, recorded in his diary before Frank was able to get the program halted, are interesting and reveal that there were elements in the Reich favoring a greater emphasis on pacification. The Minister of Propaganda bitterly noted that of the 50,000 Poles marked for deportation from Lublin, 25,000 had escaped and joined the partisans. Now 190,000 more Poles were scheduled for evacuation, and Goebbels, protesting this action, wrote, "Dr. Frank . . . hasn't sufficient authority to put his foot down on the encroachments of the police and the SS. It makes you want to tear out your hair when you encounter such appalling political ineptitude."⁷⁶ Goebbels stated that, while philosophical and ideological aims were being subordinated in the Reich proper for the sake of the war effort, such was not being done in the occupied areas where ". . . our politicians act as though we were living in profound peace." He concluded by caustically asserting that this whole affair demonstrated once again the need for leadership in the Reich and the occupied areas, and the lack of "clarity and logic" in the Reich's policies.

Perhaps to pacify the Poles, but possibly to provide for his own defense in the event of a German defeat, Dr. Frank in late 1943 and early 1944 also undertook to allow a token expression of Polish culture. In Cracow he opened a Chopin museum and a theater where Polish actors could perform Polish plays.⁷⁷ But neither this cultural move nor the attempts to placate the Lublin peasants constituted major deviations from the general Nazi effort at control through terror. No concerted effort to pacify the Poles was undertaken.

Nazi Intelligence Penetrates and Limits Resistance Operations

In addition to these indirect or preventive measures, the Nazis employed a variety of measures for detecting and controlling insurgent activities. A number of police measures were invoked. Streets, railway stations, and other communication points were watched closely and spot checks of identity cards and other papers made frequently in such places. Different documents were required in the various districts, and they were often changed, thus making it difficult for the insurgents to keep their forged papers up-to-date. Special Gestapo agents disguised as beggars, etc., circulated among the Poles in efforts to get pictures or descriptions of underground workers. Gestapo "spotters" were posted in likely spots to look for identified persons. It was apparently this "spotter" technique that led to the capture of the second commander of the Home Army, General "Grot."⁷⁸

The Gestapo also watched the homes of persons living in hiding to catch them if they returned. This resulted in the capture of Alexander Debbski, a top leader in the Nationalist party.

Agents provocateurs were also infiltrated into underground cells. One such agent worked his way to the top of his organization, an independent group, and then managed to become a leader of a coalition of about 20 independent organizations. As a result, many leaders in this network were thereafter captured, and the national movement was also placed in jeopardy because of the close liaison between its leaders and these independent leaders.⁷⁹

Special units were assigned to detect and pinpoint insurgent radio stations in communication with London. These units, scattered all over Poland, could detect a transmission and begin searches to pinpoint its point of origin within 15 to 60 minutes of its commencement. At first, uniformed personnel driving cars equipped with bulky direction-finding equipment would conduct these searches, but these were easily spotted. The Germans then began to use personnel in civilian dress, supplied with devices that could be concealed under their apparel and making their final approaches on foot. When airplanes were used to pinpoint insurgent stations, they would climb high over an area under surveillance, cut their engines and glide over the area in silence. In this way they often escaped detection by insurgent lookouts. When a station was pinpointed, troops would cordon off the area and conduct a house-by-house search. The method was so efficient that few insurgent radio operators operated for more than a few months before capture.⁸⁰

It should be mentioned that the Nazis were apparently most successful in infiltrating undergrounds and conducting mass arrests in the six months following June 1940, i. e., immediately after the fall of France. Earlier, insurgent leaders had built mass-membership organizations hastily, sacrificing discipline and security procedures, because they anticipated a quick Anglo-French victory and a concomitant need for a general insurrection throughout Poland. Such organizations were relatively easy prey for extended and concerted police countermeasures, and the Nazis succeeded in arresting whole units in late 1940 before insurgent leaders managed to restrict temporarily the influx of new members and to implement better security procedures.⁸¹

For the most part, the Nazi control program kept insurgent operations in the General Government region within tolerable limits during the years 1939-44. There were, however, signs that the Nazis in this region were seriously worried from mid-1943 on about the efficacy of their control program. Some high Nazi officials admitted that a state of emergency existed in the area because of stepped-up insurgent operations. In the same period, mass executions were greatly increased, approaching or surpassing the level of intensity seen earlier.⁸² In two instances the control program clearly broke down: both the Warsaw-ghetto uprising of early 1943 and the general Warsaw insurrection of late 1944 required the application of tactical military measures before they could be crushed.

General Stroop Begins Armed Attack on the Ghetto

On April 19, 1943, the Germans commenced military operations against the ghetto.⁸³ The campaign that followed lasted for about a month, weeks longer than the Germans originally

expected. The German commander was SS Brigadefuehrer and Polizei Generalmajor, Juergen Stroop, SS and police chief for the District of Warsaw. Stroop had at his disposal during the ghetto campaign an average daily force of about 36 officers and 2,054 men; about 30 of the officers and 1,190 of the men were Germans, with military experience of no more than three to four weeks training. The units under Stroop comprised a Waffen SS Panzer reserve and training battalion, a Waffen SS Cavalry reserve and training battalion, an SS police regiment, a Wehrmacht antiaircraft battery, and some engineering units. Stroop also had a Polish police group of 4 officers and 363 men; a Polish fire brigade with 166 men; and a battalion of foreign troops, probably Lithuanians, with 2 officers and 335 men. Apparently Stroop did not anticipate any need to adopt special, urban counter guerrilla tactics; he appears to have assumed that superior firepower would suffice to crush the insurgents quickly, even though his forces were small and had little or no military experience.

During the first five days of battle, the Germans relied mainly on conventional tactics. Beginning early each morning, troops would move through the ghetto in a single-direction sweeping operation, assisted by armor (one tank and two armored cars) and with artillery and air support. At night the German forces would withdraw from the ghetto and reinforce the guard at the wall. The Germans found that the Jews had manned the sewers, but in these first days German troops were unable to get at them. During most of the first week, German success was apparently limited to the capture and dismantling of some Jewish-occupied armaments shops and the evacuation of many noncombatants. The troops were unable to take many prisoners or permanently secure parts of the ghetto. When they succeeded in taking positions in buildings, the insurgents escaped into the labyrinth of passages, bunkers, and sewers. After the Germans withdrew at night, the Jews would emerge to retake the positions they had abandoned during the day.

New Tactics Demonstrate Difficulties of Overcoming Determined Urban Resistance

To overcome this problem the troops adopted new measures near the end of the first week. In one successful operation, the attack was delayed until midmorning and was then launched from all sides of the ghetto. This surprise encircling operation, which caught many defenders unprepared and prevented them from concentrating their defenses, resulted in the capture of many insurgents.

The most drastic and successful measure adopted at this time was the block-by-block burning of the ghetto. By systematically burning the buildings, leaving only shells, the Germans greatly reduced the number of defensible positions, destroyed numerous hard-to-find bunkers located beneath the buildings, and captured many Jews fleeing the fires. This was accomplished with relatively little expenditure in men, materiel, or time. By the end of the campaign, most buildings in the ghetto had been destroyed by fire or bombardment. Only the German-held prison was left standing. Thousands of insurgents and noncombatants were forced from buildings and bunkers and captured, and probably another 5,000 to 6,000 were killed in fires.

But even this systematic, block-by-block burning of the ghetto failed to eliminate all resistance. Many insurgents escaped and operated from bunkers that survived the fires or set up new positions in the ruins of burned-out buildings. Daily troop sweeps of the ghetto were thus necessary to ferret out and destroy the remaining defenders. To achieve maximum effect from these sweeps, the German commander divided his forces into units with specific zones of responsibility, so that his men would become quite familiar with the special features of the buildings in their zone.

Even so, it was often impossible to locate bunker entrances, especially after the defenders, somewhere around May 1, began to remain silent in their attempt to escape detection. Dogs were then used to locate entrances, and prisoners were reportedly tortured for information about the locations of the bunkers. When bunkers were found, they were destroyed by fire, dynamiting, or flooding. In the last case, pneumatic drills were used to bore holes into the bunker openings and water was forced through the holes.⁸⁴

The Germans had to overcome Jewish combatants not only in the ruins of buildings and in bunkers but also in the sewers. German troops blew up stretches of sewer pipe, placed barbed-wire netting across the tunnels at strategic points, and bricked up many sewer outlets. In yet another move, they simultaneously opened 183 sewer openings around the ghetto and placed smoke candles in the openings, forcing many insurgents to the center of the ghetto, where they were captured.⁸⁵ They tried to dam up the sewers to flood the rest of the Jews out, but this step was frustrated when the Jews blew the valves so that the flow of water resumed. Finally, German troops were forced to enter the sewers and engage the Jews who were there.

Measures To Cut Off Jews From Any Outside Aid

To prevent reinforcement of the Jews in the ghetto, the Germans maintained around the outside wall a cordon of guards comprised mainly of foreign and ethnic-Polish personnel. They placed blown openings in the wall under machinegun crossfire and initiated patrols of the "Aryan" neighborhoods immediately surrounding the ghetto. Night patrols wrapped their feet in rags to muffle their footsteps.

Other measures were designed to obtain the support, or at least noninterference, of the ethnic Poles in Warsaw. Governor General Frank issued a proclamation asking Warsaw's citizens to help the Germans in their struggle against "Communists and Jews." The Germans also posted notices that persons caught attempting to enter the ghetto without authorization would be shot. To enlist the support of Polish policemen in apprehending Jews who escaped from the ghetto, the Germans told the policemen that they could keep one-third of the cash found on captured Jews. The last measure reportedly met with some success.

The Death of the Ghetto: German-Jewish Losses Compared

By May 16, 1943, after about a month of fighting, the cumulative effects of the counter-measures had crushed all Jewish resistance. The decisive factors were superior German firepower and the piece-by-piece leveling of the entire ghetto. Victory was not achieved until all of the insurgents were either captured, killed outright, or buried under the rubble. Captured Jews, combatants and noncombatants alike, were often executed immediately after being pulled from the bunkers.

According to General Stroop, Jewish losses during the campaign were 56,065, of whom 7,000 were killed in combat; he estimated that an additional 5,000 to 6,000 lay buried in the ruins. It is not known how many of these were combatants and how many were noncombatants. Statements about counterinsurgent losses vary. German records list 15 Germans killed and scores wounded, one Polish policeman killed and five wounded, and foreign-troop losses of about a dozen wounded. Statements by Home Army insurgents indicate that German losses may have reached 300 killed and 1,000 wounded.⁸⁶

The Decline of Dr. Frank Epitomizes Nazi Intra-Party Rivalry and Friction

In a way, Dr. Frank was a near casualty of the conflagration. His prestige in Nazi circles was already waning, and the temporary breakdown of order in Warsaw almost finished him. One cannot be sure about the reasons for Frank's decline, but there is evidence that his problems were both administrative and personal and began possibly as early as the first few months of 1942. He may or may not have been an efficient administrator—there are conflicting reports. In any case a corruption scandal developed at that time in the General Government to cast a pall over the Governor General's competence. This occurrence led the anti-Nazi Ulrich von Hassell to note privately that "Frank . . . is a weak character."⁸⁷ At about the same time, Frank seems to have developed some last minute reservations about the genocide program that was then entering the mass execution stage, though the nature of his doubts is obscure and did not prompt him to raise serious objection. The same von Hassell recorded in May 1942:

Frank disapproves of these things, but is powerless because his own record is not clean. He is therefore completely in the hands of the S.S. The S.S. leader who has been put at his side, or, more accurately, has been placed above him, treats him as if he were non-existent.⁸⁸

One must interpret the above diary entry most carefully, however, for the Governor General's own party speeches of that period reveal almost a giddy enthusiasm for the extermination. But the reference to the SS is undoubtedly accurate.

Dr. Goebbels, who because of his closeness to Hitler wielded more power than his title might indicate, wrote of Frank even before the ghetto uprising that he had allowed his authority to be undercut and that "The Fuehrer no longer has any respect for him."⁸⁹ In a May 1943 diary entry, Goebbels recorded that "Events in the General Government have now progressed to the

point where Governor General Frank can no longer be kept in his position. Recent events in Warsaw finally broke Dr. Frank's neck." And a few days later, Goebbels noted that the Fuehrer had decided to replace Frank.⁸⁰

The Governor General was apparently losing an intra-party struggle of sorts with Heinrich Himmler, involving among other things a long-standing disagreement over police reprisals. Often Frank seemed to favor a more lenient or discriminating application of force than that applied by Himmler's subalterns. And increasingly the SS in the General Government, though technically under Frank's day-to-day direction, made their own policy.⁸¹ It is difficult to tell whether Frank's disagreement centered on the merits of the issue or on an underlying jurisdictional rivalry—probably both. Whatever the cause, Frank's resentment of the SS became very real.

It should be added that the Governor General also had his share of complicating personal problems. There was the not inconsiderable matter of his marital trouble, which prompted the Fuehrer to intervene and forbid a divorce. Goebbels felt that Dr. Frank's behavior in the episode was "not exactly noble" and served "...to play havoc with the Fuehrer's relationship to Frank."⁸² Added to this was Frank's rather ludicrous feud with Himmler over the merits of the legal profession. Himmler frequently discoursed on legal subjects—it was something of a hobby with him—and particularly on the "parasitic" function of the "legal gentry"; Frank's resentment of this, strangely professional, did not fail to impress the Reichsfuehrer SS unfavorably.⁸³

In spite of all of this, the Governor General survived and continued in his office. Dr. Goebbels complained in mid-1943 that "Frank is to be given one more chance to prove his worth."⁸⁴ The Governor General and the SS maintained basic security in their divergent ways for more than a year. In late 1943, when insurgent operations reached new plateaus of violence, Frank, in a pacification attempt, managed to get the Lublin resettlement program halted and made a couple of moves to allow greater Polish cultural expression, while at the same time the SS supervised greatly increased, indiscriminate roundups of hostages and mass executions.

General Bach-Zelewski Directs German Effort To Defeat the Warsaw Uprising

In August-September 1944, the general Warsaw uprising occurred and the Germans commenced their second military campaign against insurgents in Poland.⁸⁵ Although the Germans employed some tactics used in the earlier ghetto operations, this second campaign differed significantly from the earlier one. The most apparent difference was of course the scope of the new campaign. All of Warsaw was the battle zone and a larger commitment of troops was necessary. By the climax of the battle the Germans had introduced about 40,000 troops, including forces of the SS; military police; Luftwaffe ground staff; Hermann Goering, Viking, and Totenkopf (Death's Head) Panzer divisions; and the 73d Infantry Division. The Kaminsky Brigade of former Soviet soldiers was also used. Commanding all the troops was the SS Gen. Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski, an officer with previous counterinsurgency experience.

During the first three days of the battle the German response was mainly defensive, at least on the western side of the Vistula where the battle centered. In this period over 1,000 German troops were captured by the Home Army, 50 tanks were lost, control of two-thirds of the city and the key bridges was lost, and German-held strongpoints in the city were isolated and placed under siege. By and large the limited offensive action of the Germans seems to have consisted of reprisals against civilians and sporadic probes. Reportedly, houses were set afire, hundreds of persons were herded into basements and grenaded, and many captured youths and men were shot. Civilians lashed to ladders were used as shields in some actions, an unsuccessful measure as Home Army troops fired anyway. The Soviet Kaminsky Brigade is said by a Polish source to have been responsible for many of these atrocities.

Germans Go on Offensive, Using Special Tactics

A concerted counterattack was finally launched on August 4, from which time the Germans were engaged in offensive operations to retake the city. Their immediate objective was to open up the main arteries and bridges leading across the Vistula to the eastern front. Using tanks, artillery, and incendiaries to set fire to the buildings along these routes, the Germans managed by around August 9 to force back Home Army units from the major east-west roads and bridges. To prevent major sniping activity by Home Army personnel who returned and set up positions in the ruins along these roads, the Germans bricked up the windows of the ruins adjoining the roads.

With this initial objective achieved, the Germans began a campaign to retake all of the city, a far more difficult task and one that would require special measures. The German attack was planned to maximize the two German assets--good vehicular mobility across and around the city and superior firepower. Tank, artillery, and air support were therefore concentrated on one sector of the city at a time, thus achieving the firepower and armor needed to destroy the fortified positions of the insurgents. After success in one sector, attention was shifted to another sector; in this way a piecemeal destruction of insurgent positions was accomplished. The Germans took peripheral sectors first and then worked toward the center of Warsaw, but they shifted momentarily to concentrate on securing those sectors along the western bank of the Vistula after the Red army advanced to the eastern bank in the third week of September.

The sequence of steps in the daily attack procedure became fairly routine. In the mornings the Germans would begin with a Stuka attack at 300 feet and intensive artillery saturation. Then in the afternoon, insurgent positions would be attacked with remote-controlled mobile mines, followed by Tiger tanks and the infantry. Fighting, always vicious on both sides, was often house-to-house or even floor-to-floor. The Germans seldom used their artillery at night, so that the insurgents often took advantage of this lull to counterattack and attempt to reoccupy positions lost during the day. The climax of the fighting came in the last week of August, when major sections of the city fell to the Germans. Thereafter, the insurgents were on the defensive and faced growing logistical problems.

The Germans also employed extensive measures to cut off insurgent food and supplies. One step apparently involved the evacuation of peasants from villages surrounding Warsaw. To disrupt Allied airdrop activities, the Germans set up intensive antiaircraft barrages and launched grenades into drop zones lit up at night. These barrages forced British planes to bypass Warsaw and drop supplies in a forest north of the city, thus greatly complicating insurgent logistical problems. When the insurgents in Warsaw, assisted by Home Army partisans located in the forest, managed to get many of the supplies dropped there, the Germans moved to destroy this forest base. Forest fires were set, but the guerrillas succeeded in putting them out. Only toward the end of the uprising did the Germans succeed in encircling the forest and capturing or killing most of the insurgents located there.

The Germans also undertook to interrupt the insurgents' use of the sewers, employing many of the measures used in the ghetto campaign. But there were some innovations. Depinned grenades were suspended into the dark sewers to explode on contact with persons traveling in the tunnels. Petrol was poured into the sewers and set afire. The Germans also opened manholes and posted sentries at the openings to drop grenades into the openings at the first sign of movement.

Germans Use Propaganda, Offer Combatant Rights, and Effect Surrender

Interestingly enough, there were some attempts at propagandistic persuasion. In an effort to convince the insurgents of the hopelessness of their action during talks with Polish leaders, the Germans referred to Soviet hostility toward the Poles and the inaction of the Red army. In one attempt to confuse, the Germans resorted to black propaganda, distributing leaflets ostensibly signed by General "Bor" that ordered Home Army fighters to cease operations because of lack of Soviet support. Another black leaflet sought to create in isolated Home Army units the impression that their commander was considering joint German-Polish action against the Soviets.

After these attempts, all of which failed, the Nazis' propaganda effort was aimed mainly at inducing surrender. The Germans promised combatant rights to the insurgents and humane treatment for civilians, all of whom would be evacuated from the city. Until the last week in September, the Poles were disinclined to accept these overtures, but in the closing days of September, when hunger and thirst had become acute and no prospect of a Soviet offensive was in sight, the Home Army commander agreed to the German terms. The surrender agreement was signed on October 2, 1944, and the city's inhabitants and Home Army personnel, including General "Bor," were soon thereafter taken into captivity and evacuated. General "Bor" later claimed that the campaign cost the Home Army about 15,000 killed, captured, or wounded. He somewhat optimistically put German losses at 10,000 killed, 7,000 missing, and 9,000 wounded.⁹⁶

A Note on Casualties Inflicted and Suffered by the Germans in Poland

With these military campaigns against the Warsaw Jews in 1943 and against the Home Army in Warsaw in 1944, the Nazis crushed the two major insurgent operations in the General Government area. Considered together, these two battles may have exacted a heavy toll in German lives; they were certainly costly in insurgent lives. It is estimated that, whereas the Germans may possibly have lost between 5,000 and 10,000 men, the Jewish and Polish insurgents suffered about 25,000 killed in action.

Numerous losses on both sides also occurred in the General Government section as a result of the overall Nazi occupation policy and Polish underground activities. Before 1943 the Nazis executed perhaps 17,000 ethnic Poles; from 1943 on, they probably executed close to 15,000. In addition, almost 3,500,000 Polish Jews were liquidated in the infamous "special action." On the other hand, German losses, excluding those killed in the two battles of Warsaw, did not exceed 6,000.⁹⁷

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

Judged in terms of the limited Nazi occupation objective, it is probably correct to say that the Nazis were generally successful in their counterinsurgency campaign. At no time did insurgent operations decisively interfere with Nazi occupation policy or war plans. The Poles were fully exploited economically, virtually all of the Jews were exterminated, and the lives of Germans in the annexed part were protected. Furthermore, there is no evidence that Polish insurgent operations ever decisively affected the Wehrmacht.

Nazi counterinsurgency in Poland demonstrated the efficacy of a stringent control program in achieving limited, short-range objectives. The application of unmitigated coercion and punishment, coupled with extensive police control measures, enabled the occupier, at least for five years, to utilize a relatively isolated country's economic productivity, to maintain life-or-death control over an entire population, and to use the region as a base for external military operations. Almost complete hostility to the Germans among the Polish population was not sufficient to overcome the ruthless application of force by the occupier.

On the other hand the stringent and often brutal control measures that made this a strong and largely successful counterinsurgency program also made it a potential failure. Since the measures only controlled and did not pacify the population, the Nazis were always confronted by a hostile people, potentially willing to cooperate even with the Soviets. This became a threat to the Nazis when the Red army entered Poland. As it turned out, however, the Poles remained largely isolated. International politics precluded their making a militarily significant contribution to the liberation of their country.

As for Hans Frank, he lived through the collapse of his satrapy in Poland and was brought to trial at Nuremberg by his Allied captors and convicted of crimes against humanity. His end

was oddly befitting a life marked by a paradoxical mixture of hard core Nazism and cultural refinement. Frank neither committed suicide at the last moment nor asserted his belief in the correctness of his past loyalties and actions. Instead, he became penitent and begged God's forgiveness before he was hanged on October 16, 1946.

NOTES

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¹⁹IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XXXVI, 482.

²⁰Hans Frank, "Tagebuch des Herrn Generalgouverneurs fuer die Besetzten polnischen Gebiete," (hereinafter referred to as Frank's Diary), Doc. 2233-PS, in IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XXIX, 474, 572-81; Occupied Europe: German Exploitation and Its Post-War Consequences (prepared in the Information Department of the Royal Institute of International Affairs; London: Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 49; and Lemkin, Axis Rule in Occupied Europe, p. 87.

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³⁴Karski, Story of a Secret State, pp. 109-11; and Stefan Korbonski, Fighting Warsaw (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1956), pp. 27-32.

³⁵Korbonski, Fighting Warsaw, p. 37; Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, pp. 28-29; and Karski, Story of a Secret State, pp. 101-13.

³⁶Karski, Story of a Secret State, pp. 194-95; and Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, pp. 172-73.

³⁷Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, pp. 42, 44, 86, 169; Karski, Story of a Secret State, pp. 194-96; and Korbonski, Fighting Warsaw, pp. 7-59, 113-14, 286-89.

- 38 Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, pp. 86, 89-91.
- 39 Ibid., pp. 38, 114, 152-53, 167, 288-89; Karwki, Story of a Secret State, pp. 249-52; and Korbonski, Fighting Warsaw, pp. 117-33.
- 40 Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, pp. 69, 71-72, 142-43, 150, 153-54.
- 41 Tenenbaum, Underground, passim.
- 42 Ibid., pp. 73-92; Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, pp. 97-104; and Toynbee and Toynbee (eds.), Hitler's Europe, pp. 566-67.
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- 44 Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, pp. 97-105; and Tenenbaum, Underground, pp. 90-98.
- 45 Ibid., pp. 92-102; Toynbee and Toynbee (eds.), Hitler's Europe, p. 567; and Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, pp. 105-106.
- 46 Tenenbaum, Underground, pp. 93-106.
- 47 Ibid., pp. 78, 92, 96, 110-11, 127-28; Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, pp. 107-108; and "The Warsaw Ghetto Is No More," in Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, III, 718-44, 757-58, 767.
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- 50 Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, pp. 16, 118-38, 173-211.
- 51 Ibid., pp. 173-84, 186, 198.
- 52 Ibid., pp. 199-215, Herbert Feis, Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), p. 381.
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- 54 Ibid.
- 55 Ibid.
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- 62 Great Britain, Nazi Occupied Europe, p. 62.
- 63 International Council, Third Reich, p. 177.

⁶⁴Tenenbaum, Underground, pp. 78-86; and "The Warsaw Ghetto Is No More," in Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, III, 720-21.

⁶⁵Secret circular of the Academy of German Law, Jan. 1940, Doc. 661-PS, in IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XXVI, 241.

⁶⁶IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, VII, 469.

⁶⁷Korbonski, Fighting Warsaw, pp. 16, 25-26, 41, 43-46; and official German documents cited in Piotrowski, Hans Frank's Diary, pp. 51-56.

⁶⁸The Goebbels Diaries, 1942-1943, pp. 318, 328, 332, 350.

⁶⁹Quoted from Frank's Diary, cited in International Council, Third Reich, p. 765.

⁷⁰Official German document, cited in Piotrowski, Hans Frank's Diary, pp. 57, 59; and Frank's Diary, Doc. 2233-PS, in IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XXIX, 356ff.

⁷¹Piotrowski, Hans Frank's Diary, pp. 21-22, 36-39, 109, 111-12, 152, 154-57, 171-72.

⁷²Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, pp. 36-37.

⁷³Ibid., pp. 154-57.

⁷⁴Official German document cited in Piotrowski, Hans Frank's Diary, p. 56.

⁷⁵Piotrowski, Hans Frank's Diary, pp. 105-106; Toynbee and Toynbee (eds.), Hitler's Europe, p. 567; and Tenenbaum, Underground, pp. 101-102.

⁷⁶Official German documents cited in Piotrowski, Hans Frank's Diary, pp. 84-87; and The Goebbels Diaries, 1942-1943, p. 396.

⁷⁷Official German documents and IMT Doc. 2233-PS, cited in Piotrowski, Hans Frank's Diary, pp. 116-17.

⁷⁸See Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, *passim*; and Korbonski, Fighting Warsaw, *passim*.

⁷⁹Korbonski, Fighting Warsaw, pp. 55, 177-81.

⁸⁰Ibid., *passim*; and Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, pp. 161-63.

⁸¹Karski, Story of a Secret State, p. 192.

⁸²Official German document cited in Piotrowski, Hans Frank's Diary, p. 57; Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, pp. 154-57; and The Goebbels Diaries, 1942-1943, p. 456.

⁸³The account of the anti-ghetto campaign is based primarily upon "The Warsaw Ghetto Is No More," in Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, III, 713-74.

⁸⁴Also see Tenenbaum, Underground, pp. 113, 115, 117.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 123.

⁸⁶"The Warsaw Ghetto Is No More," in Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression, III, 718, 727, 772-73; Korbonski, Fighting Warsaw, p. 262; and Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, p. 107.

⁸⁷Von Hassell, Diaries, p. 242; Alan Bullock, Hitler: A Case Study in Tyranny (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin, 1962), p. 676; The Goebbels Diaries, 1942-1943, pp. 184-85.

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⁹¹Ibid., pp. 196, 303.

⁹²The Goebbels Diaries, 1942-1943, p. 283.

⁹³ Felix Kersten, The Kersten Memoirs, 1940-1945, trans. by Constantine Fitzgibbon and James Oliver (London: Hutchinson, 1956), pp. 100-108.

⁹⁴ The Goebbels Diaries, 1942-1943, p. 389.

⁹⁵ The account of the Warsaw Uprising of August-September 1944 is based primarily upon Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, pp. 210-380.

⁹⁶ Ibid., pp. 377-78.

⁹⁷ Official German document cited in Piotrowski, Hans Frank's Diary, p. 56; and Bor-Komorowski, Secret Army, pp. 153-57.

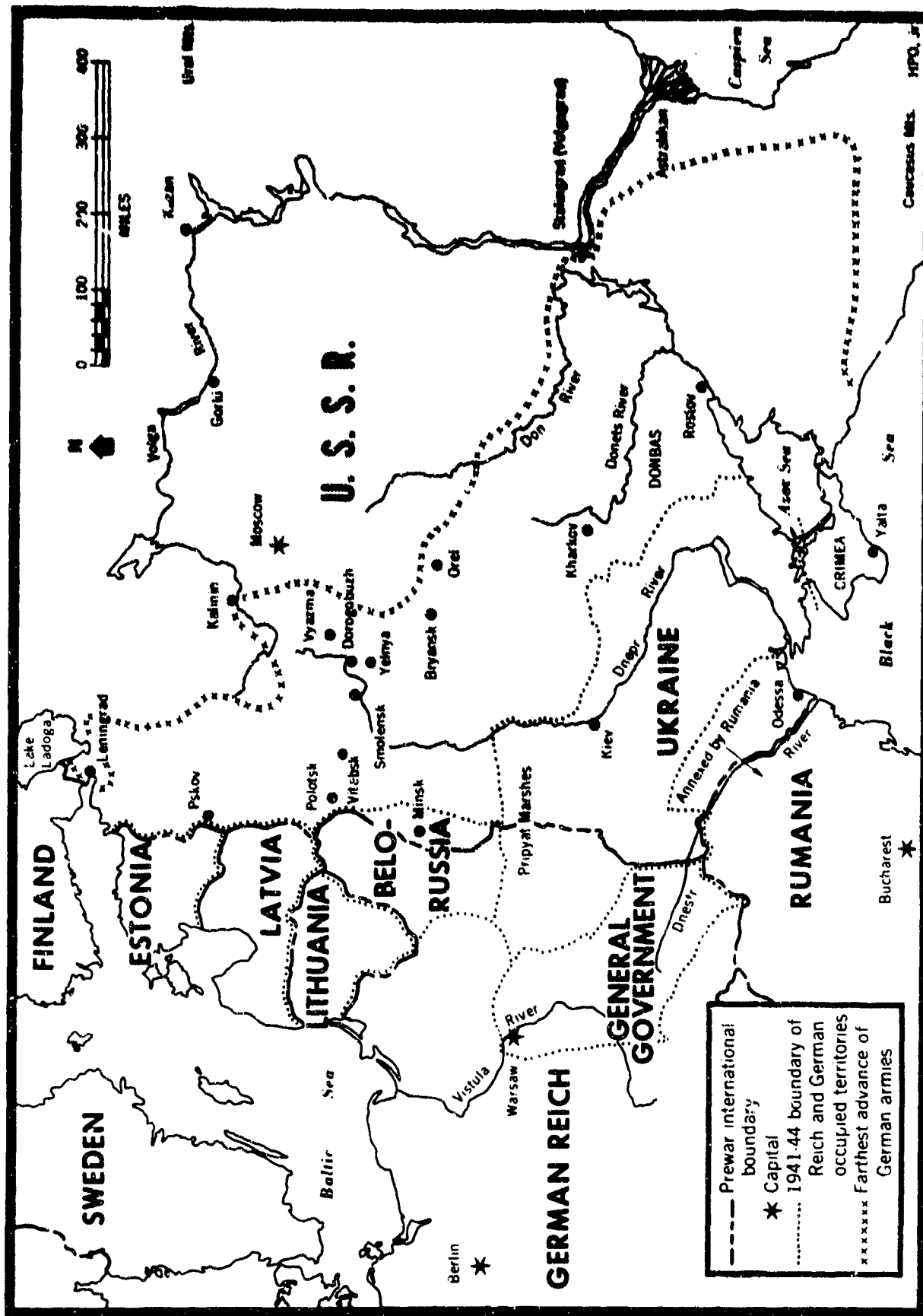
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Chapter Ten

**UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS
1941-1944**

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German occupation policies during World War II stimulated the growth of a Soviet partisan movement which acted in support of the Soviet armies' main defensive efforts; German military power then had to be diverted from major offensive operations to contain the guerrilla threat to their rear area security.

BACKGROUND

Operation BARBAROSSA, which launched the German invasion of the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941, was met, not only by a stubborn defense by Soviet conventional arms, but also by insurgency and guerrilla warfare in the occupied rear areas. As an element of what Premier Joseph Stalin was to call the Great Patriotic War, guerrilla activities continued for three years on an ever-increasing scale. They did not end until the Red army had pushed German forces across the western frontier into Poland in the summer of 1944.

The intense and protracted struggle between the German occupation forces and the Soviet partisans has a special place in the operations of World War II because of the vast area over which it took place, the great numbers of men involved on both sides, the objectives of the two opponents, and the techniques that were employed. Many situations and problems encountered today in guerrilla and counter guerrilla operations occurred in occupied Russia, where terrain, climate, and population offered innumerable variations on the theme. It would be strange indeed if there were not lessons for future application from this "greatest irregular resistance movement in the history of warfare."¹

The Soviet Union is the largest continental state in the world—three times the size of the United States. The scene of the guerrilla warfare in World War II was European Russia, which equals in size the remainder of Europe.² The Germans had planned to occupy about half of European Russia, but since they did not fully succeed, the insurgency was limited to its western third.

European Russia and the Main Areas of Guerrilla Operations

European Russia is a land of low relief.¹ Its main geographic feature is the East European Plain, which extends from northern Germany to the Ural Mountains. The heartland of this vast expanse is the Moscow region. The shortest route to Moscow from the west is the so-called northern land bridge, which runs along the blunt spine of the Smolensk-Moscow ridge. Napoleon took this route in 1812; so also did the Germans with their main thrust in 1941. To the north of the land bridge lies a wide belt of primeval forests and swamps extending toward Leningrad. In the center of this forbidding area lies Polotsk. To the south of the land bridge spreads one of the most formidable terrain obstacles of Europe, the Pripyat Marshes. Toward the east the marshes give way to an equally large, densely wooded area, whose hub is Bryansk. The Ukrainian black earth region and the steppe cover the southern portion of European Russia. Here a second invasion route leads from south Poland to the industrial regions of the Dnepr Bend and the Donbas, and eventually to the Caucasus and Urals. Great rivers—among them the Dnestr, Dnepr, Donets, Don, and Volga—impede an invader's advance in this zone.

During World War II, the vast swamp and forest areas on both sides of the main route to Moscow became the strongholds of the partisan movement. The main centers were at Polotsk and Bryansk. In contrast, the Ukraine, whose wide open spaces offered few safe areas for partisans, remained relatively free of guerrilla activity.

Of the three main industrial regions in western Russia—Leningrad, Moscow, and a portion of the Ukraine—the Germans captured only the Donbas (Donets Basin) in the Ukraine. The areas occupied were largely agricultural, and Soviet evacuation and scorched-earth policies tended to reduce the industrial capabilities of the captured regions.

All of European Russia except for the Black Sea coast suffers the hardships of a harsh continental climate. Summers are short and hot and the relentless grip of dark winter seems endless. To make things worse, spring thaws and autumn rains turn the land and its roads into a sea of mud. During these two mud seasons, each lasting for weeks, vehicular traffic comes to a virtual standstill.⁴

By western standards, the Russian system of communications in 1941 was wholly inadequate for the requirements of modern warfare. Only three main communications arteries extended from Poland eastward, and even these rail lines and roads were poor and often structurally unsound. The absence of lateral links in the system was one of its greatest weaknesses. In addition, communications were highly vulnerable to attack because the many bridges and culverts offered inviting targets for sabotage or demolition.

The People of the U.S.S.R. and Their Insurgent Past

In 1941 the Soviet Union had an estimated 200 million inhabitants of whom almost three-fourths were concentrated in European Russia. Approximately 50 million Russians fell under

temporary German rule. Although 182 ethnic groups were then registered in Russia and 149 different languages were spoken, five groups accounted for 90 percent of the population: the Great Russians (52 percent), the Ukrainians (19 percent), the Muslim Turkic nations (11 percent), and the Caucasian tribes and the Belorussians (4 percent each). About one-third of the people lived in cities.⁵

The October revolution of 1917 and the ensuing consolidation of Bolshevik control had ended a long Russian tradition of conspiracy and insurgency against established authority. After the Bolsheviks had become rulers, they had ruthlessly suppressed insurgent efforts by dissident groups.* Even the methods and experiences of partisan warfare had been relegated to the safe repositories of history books. Despite all later propaganda claims, the Soviet partisan movement of 1941-44 was the result, not of a spontaneous uprising of the masses, but of deliberate plans and determined action on the part of the Communist party and its national, regional, and local leaders.

German Actions Unwittingly Encourage Growth of the Guerrilla Movement

Assuming that the as yet undefeated German force could vanquish the Soviet Union in a bold blitz campaign, the dictator of Germany, Adolf Hitler, and his advisers neglected to plan adequately for other contingencies. Guerrilla warfare was hardly considered. During the offensives of 1941, which carried the German armies to the gates of Moscow, the Germans bypassed large numbers of Soviet soldiers and scores of military depots. In their headlong rush to the east, the Germans neglected to mop up the rear areas and thus handed to the Soviet leaders the opportunity to organize the Red army stragglers into the nuclei of a partisan movement. The swift advance of the Germans also cut off many party officials, stranding them behind the front. With no chance of survival if the Germans should capture them, these bypassed Russians set to work building a Communist underground and partisan movement, for which they furnished the leadership. German tactical reverses in the winter of 1941-1942 gave the partisans the opportunity to consolidate.

The growth of an anti-German guerrilla movement was greatly aided—almost ensured—by the repressive nature of Nazi occupation policies, which were designed to enslave the Russian people, exploit the economic assets of the country, and deny large groups of the population the political freedom they were seeking. The Nazis were totally indifferent as to whether the occupied peoples, in the course of being exploited, starved to death.⁶ Thus the partisan movement, which at first had found little or no support among the people, gradually became the focal point of opposition to the Germans and often the only refuge for the persecuted.

*See, for example, Chapter Four, "U.S.S.R. (1917-1921)."

INSURGENCY

In an address to the Russian people on July 3, 1941, 11 days after the German assault, Stalin signaled the formation of the Soviet partisan movement:

Partisan units, mounted and on foot, must be formed; divisions and groups must be organized to combat enemy troops, to foment partisan warfare everywhere, to blow up bridges and roads, damage telephone lines, set fire to forests, stores, transports. In the occupied regions conditions must be made unbearable for the enemy and all his accomplices. They must be hounded and annihilated at every step and all their measures frustrated.⁷

This was the broad directive that governed all plans and activities of the partisan movement throughout its existence.

An Overview of the Insurgency—Its Phases and Its Strength

The movement developed in three phases. The first, from June to December 1941, was the formative period. At this time the movement was small, numbering only some 30,000 men. The German invasion and its speed of advance caught the U.S.S.R. off guard and plunged Soviet plans and preparations into a disarray that could not be overcome by improvisation. The first hard-core partisans, mostly Red army and Communist party men, lacked popular support, guerrilla training, and adequate communications. Their operations were generally unsuccessful.⁸

During the second phase, January to August 1942, after the German defeats in the winter battles, the partisan movement was reorganized by the Soviet High Command. Tighter control, better training, and a vast increase in logistical support accompanied an expansion in strength to about 150,000. The former battalion-size units became regiments, brigades, and larger groups, which aggressively sought control over large areas behind the German lines. Partisan missions shifted from simple harassment of rear areas to planned operations in tactical support of the Red army, with emphasis on cutting lines of communications and gathering intelligence. In these missions the partisan units were fairly effective, although their successes provoked large-scale countermeasures and often led them into pitched battle with German forces in which they suffered heavy losses.⁹

In the later summer of 1942, the partisan movement gradually passed into its third and mature phase. By the time of the German surrender at Stalingrad in early 1943, it had become clear that the German armies would eventually have to retreat and that the Soviets would return and reinstitute control over German-held areas. Partisan strength and local support accordingly increased. The guerrillas reached their peak number of about a quarter of a million in the summer of 1943. But the rapid growth of the movement diluted the fighting qualities of units. While the original partisan formations had consisted largely of former Red army

personnel, up to two-thirds were now local conscripts. Despite stepped-up training, efficiency remained low. This, however, was partially balanced by the change in the attitude of the population from indifference to moderate support. The organization and control of the partisan units, as well as logistics, were also improved by the Soviet High Command.

With the westward advance of the Red army, partisan missions changed from acts of terror against collaborators and sabotage against economic and industrial installations to a "war of the rails," the concerted, large-scale attack against German supply lines. These activities—coordinated in the late summer of 1943 and again in January–February 1944 with massive Red army operations—culminated in June 1944, in guerrilla attacks designed to paralyze the German army just before the launching of the final Soviet offensive. This much-propagandized effort, the effectiveness of which may have been somewhat overemphasized, was the final effort of the movement. Shortly thereafter, Soviet armies crossed into Poland, thus obviating the need for guerrilla warfare.

Soviet Planning for Guerrilla Warfare

While the operations of the partisan movement passed through three phases, only one basic change in its organization occurred. At the beginning of the conflict, when Stalin had called for the formation of partisan units, the instrument for executing these orders did not exist. One reason for this was the fact that the Soviet strategists apparently had envisioned an offensive toward the west, which would have made a partisan movement unnecessary. Another reason may have been the fear that open preparations for guerrilla warfare would have shaken the confidence of the people in the government. A general scheme for partisan warfare had been planned, however, though only the highest political and military leaders knew about it. Based on a regional concept, it was to be implemented by the party, the NKVD, and the Red army.¹⁰

In the initial confusion following the German invasion of 1941, which came as a complete surprise to Stalin and his close advisers, the Soviet leaders were only partially successful in implementing their secret plans. These were based on the assumption that a slow and deliberate Red army withdrawal would allow party and state officials time to organize multilayered and complex partisan and diversionist networks. The party Central Committee at the All-Union and Union Republic levels was to organize the insurgency along administrative channels leading from the oblasts or provinces, to the rural and city districts, and to state complexes such as the railroads, industrial plants, and government farms. At the oblast and district echelons, a dual command structure consisting of an overt and an underground organization was to be established. In the event of German occupation, the overt organizations were to be evacuated, together with certain key elements of the population and all essential industrial machinery; the underground cadres were to stay behind and activate a partisan movement.

The NKVD had the special task of forming a secret network of diversionist groups of agents, not exceeding seven operatives each, for active sabotage. In addition, NKVD districts were ordered to organize home defense units known as destruction battalions. The missions of these units were primarily defensive: to prevent enemy sabotage and to guard installations. The NKVD was also charged with the security function of screening prospective leaders and members of the partisan movement. As the German armies advanced deeper into Russia, the destruction battalions were assigned to the partisan movement and were incorporated as combat battalions (*otryady*) into the party regional underground organization.

Training and especially supply of the regional partisan movement became the responsibility of the Red army, specifically the Tenth Department of the Main Administration of Political Propaganda, which was under the immediate control of the Central Committee of the Communist party. Through these channels, army fronts (army groups) and armies were ordered to organize, direct, and supply partisan groups behind the German lines. Directives enjoined commissars and party members never to surrender; if cut off, they were to continue the battle in the German rear with sabotage and terrorism.¹¹

Genesis of the Guerrilla Movement and Its Political Implications

The Red army units bypassed by the German army initially constituted a larger reservoir of manpower for guerrilla warfare than did the regional partisan units. Army leaders and political commissars proved to be an effective and fanatical core around which the tens of thousands of stragglers and escapees from prisoner-of-war camps could be organized. Partisan units were first formed in the areas in which large encirclement battles had been fought. In the Ukraine, where terrain did not favor guerrilla activities and popular support was not at first forthcoming, the Soviet command resorted to the expedient of dropping small groups of para-troop commandos behind German lines with orders to destroy specific targets and gather intelligence. These efforts, which bore the marks of hasty improvisation, achieved little or nothing.

In the eyes of the Soviet command, however, the value of the partisan movement was not diminished by its small accomplishments. Faced with a choice between abandoning the movement or trying to make it an effective instrument of political strategy and tactical operations, the Russians in the winter of 1941-42 decided on the latter. A strong argument in favor of revitalizing and reorganizing the partisan movement was undoubtedly the fact that only through an underground could the Communist party hope to maintain a political hold on the occupied areas. This factor may well have outweighed any possible military considerations.

Development of a Centralized Partisan Organization

If the partisan movement was to live and succeed, an effective chain of command was urgently needed. The Soviet leaders shifted emphasis: instead of dealing separately with

numerous small and often isolated individual partisan units, they began to consider the movement as a whole. A centralized organization was gradually developed and was complete by the spring of 1942. The new organization was sufficiently flexible to allow for regional differences and shifting tactical needs, but the line of authority was always clear-cut. What was more, the new organization proved itself effective in action throughout the remainder of the struggle.

Absolute control of the partisan movement was vested in the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist party and its executive organ, the National Defense Committee.¹² New in the chain of command was the Central Staff of the Partisan Movement, established on the same level as the Red Army Supreme Command. The Red army's influence over the partisan movement, which had been greatest during the first phase, found recognition in the appointment of Marshal Kliment Voroshilov as its commander in chief. The real power, however, lay with the party and its representative, Panteleimon Ponomarenko, first secretary of the Belorussian Communist Party. He was the chief of staff and appears to have been the actual commander of the movement.¹³

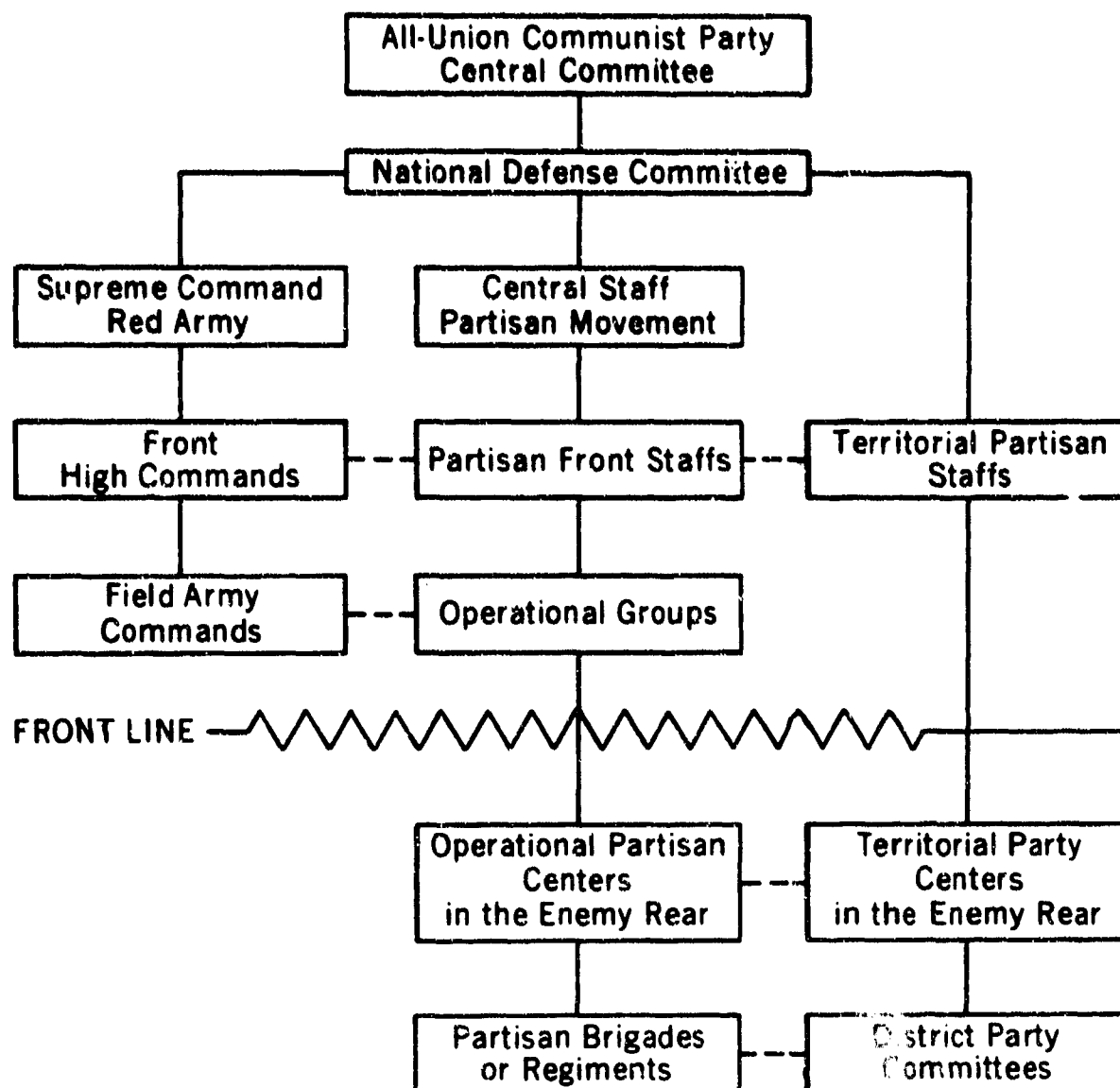
The central staff controlled the partisan front staffs, which were organized at the level of the various army front headquarters. Thus, for example, the Kalinin Front, West Front, and Bryansk Front, which together opposed the German Army Group Center, were each paralleled by a partisan front staff, whose function it was to pass on directives received from the central staff, issue additional orders for its own sector in coordination with the front staff, handle personnel and logistical matters, and collect intelligence data. On the level of each field army, a partisan operational group fulfilled similar missions on a commensurately narrower scale.

Organization of Partisans Behind German Lines

In the German rear areas, the partisan movement retained a dual chain of command—partisan and party. Operational partisan centers, similar in structure to the operational groups, were established to control partisan operations over large areas. They received their orders from their corresponding operational groups and in some instances from higher partisan staffs, including the central staff.

Next in the chain of command were the partisan brigades, sometimes also referred to or designated as regiments. The brigades had developed from the otryads, often by absorbing one or more of them during the period of expansion. The partisan units of 1941 had rarely exceeded 300 men. By 1942, however, the new brigades numbered 1,000 to 2,000 members and sometimes more. The size of a brigade was governed by practical considerations: on the one hand, the shortage of qualified commanders and the need for control and sustained operations made it imperative to enlarge the otryads; on the other hand, the strength of the brigades had to be tailored to match the resources of a given base area and the available means of communications and control. Units that grew too large became attractive targets for large-scale countermeasures

ORGANIZATION OF THE SOVIET PARTISAN MOVEMENT AFTER SPRING 1942



and faced destruction. There was a great deal of variation in the organization of brigades, but most were subdivided into battalions. In some instances a partisan division command was created as an intermediate headquarters between partisan centers and brigades or independent regiments.

The Communist party held the reins through two channels. One was through a commissar and an NKVD official operating on the level of the military commander at all echelons of the

Red army and the partisan movement. The other channel was through the National Defense Committee and territorial partisan staffs, territorial party centers in the German rear, and district party committees in the occupied areas. At corresponding levels in the enemy rear, the party territorial organization and the partisan movement closely coordinated their missions.

Logistics and Discipline

Logistic support for the partisan movement, which had been haphazard in 1941, was tightly controlled after the new organization took hold. Ammunition, weapons, explosives, medical supplies, spare parts, and even the morale builders of tobacco, liquor, and mail were airdropped or landed on partisan-built landing strips. Key personnel were brought in and casualties—even some prisoners of war—taken out on a regular basis. Allotment and shipment of supplies was from major supply bases to subsidiary bases, and this distribution was regularly handled by supply sections. For staples the partisans continued to rely on local resources. During the last phase of the war, partisan supply developed into a large-scale logistical operation, but although partisan units were often heavily armed, in some areas even with tanks and crew-operated weapons, they were not nearly so well equipped as regular units. The Soviet command determined the flow of supplies and could gauge the expected success of any operation by the degree of support it could make available. Recalcitrant units and those that showed poor internal discipline could be brought to heel simply by withholding supplies, and the central staff never hesitated to use this method.

Discipline became a real problem after the rapid expansion of the partisan units. Later conscripts proved less willing or able than the first recruits to accept the rigid disciplinary standards that had prevailed earlier. The Soviets were able to maintain discipline only through continuous, determined efforts of the military commanders, commissars, and party officials. Often draconian measures had to be taken, including the shooting of culprits before assembled partisan units. By this means and because the Germans regularly shot "bandits" even when they surrendered, desertions were held to the relatively low level of 10 percent or less.

Such was the organizational structure, implemented early in 1942, of the Soviet partisan movement. That structure provided the basis for the growth and expansion of the movement and converted it into a formidable instrument of Soviet defense.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

The German attack on the U.S.S.R. in June 1941 followed Adolf Hitler's decision to destroy the Soviet Union, to take possession of European Russia as far east as the Volga River and as far south as Astrakhan, and to dominate these large territories by a combination of military, political, and economic measures. After this, he reasoned, he would be master of the European continent and thus in an unassailable position.

Nazi Plans for the Invasion of Russia

Between July 1940 and June 1941, German political and military agencies worked on plans for the campaign against and the occupation of Russia. Specific plans dealt with a blitz campaign, to be conducted and successfully concluded in the summer of 1941, and with the military occupation, political administration, and economic exploitation to follow. To some degree the execution of these plans influenced the rise and development of guerrilla activities in the Soviet Union.

The military campaign plan, BARBAROSSA, assigned to three army groups—North, Center, and South—the mission of crushing the Soviet armed forces in the western border zone by a series of deep penetrations combined with successive encirclements, employing large armored forces as spearheads. A total of 142 German and the equivalent of 40 other Axis divisions, and some 3,000 tanks and planes were to be committed to the campaign. Hitler was bent on two main thrusts, one aiming at Leningrad in the north, the other at Stalingrad and the Caucasus in the south. The army, on the other hand, intended to drive straight for Moscow. The Germans never resolved these conflicting strategic concepts. Vacillating from one to the other and in the end combining them, the German High Command lost the advantage of concentrating its force, wasted time unnecessarily, and ultimately failed to obtain even one of its main objectives.¹⁴

To Hitler, the war with Russia was more than just another military campaign. His political objectives were to "destroy Bolshevism root and branch" and divide Russia into "socialist states dependent on Germany." Later he summed up his policy as "first: conquer; second: rule; third: exploit."¹⁵ The army's place in this scheme was confined to defeating the Soviet armed forces. Hitler deliberately curtailed the army's jurisdiction: as it advanced east, the army was to pass the responsibility for administering the conquered rear areas on to a political administration.

Administration of German-Occupied Areas and Rear Area Security

This political administration was delegated to a newly created ministry under the Reich Minister for Occupied Eastern Territories, Alfred Rosenberg, and to its subordinate reich commissariats that were to operate in the Baltic States, Belorussia, the Ukraine, and—so went the plans—Moscow and the Caucasus. Heinrich Himmler—who as Reichsführer SS (Schutzstaffeln der Nationalsozialistischen Deutschen Arbeiterpartei) headed a Nazi party organization having unusual political, military, and police functions—was empowered to "clean up" these areas by eliminating all Communist functionaries and other "undesirables." The army protested against these so-called Commissar Orders as senseless and potentially damaging to rear area security. Hitler's answer was to authorize the SS to extend its activities right into the tactical operations zone.

Deprived of an overall rear area security mission, the army assigned the responsibility for such security functions as it retained to its chief of supply and administration (G-4) and his

counterparts on the army group and army levels. For administrative purposes, the army groups and field armies subdivided their rear areas into regional, rural district, and urban areas. Rear area security was thus removed from the operational chain of command.

On the premise that the campaign would be so short that the Russians could not raise an effective partisan movement, and owing to manpower shortages, the German army planners decided to forgo organizing special counter guerrilla forces. For guarding supply routes and installations, controlling traffic, and handling prisoners of war, the army high command assigned three security divisions to each army group. A typical security division comprised one infantry regiment, one artillery battalion, and some national guard and police battalions. Except for certain specialized units, these were the forces whose principal mission would be to deal with the guerrillas. The security divisions probably had a complement of 100,000 men in 1941 and up to 150,000 in 1943, a number too small to cope with the growing partisan movement. They were poorly equipped and organized, and they lacked mobility. Their greatest deficiency, however, was their lack of training for guerrilla warfare.

The German decision not to organize counter guerrilla forces was soon seen to have been a mistake. The first incidents of guerrilla activity occurred within days of the German attack and forced combat units to turn back to pacify sectors in their rear instead of executing their primary missions. Even after security forces had been assigned, their inadequacy in numbers and capabilities required the diversion of combat elements for rear area security tasks. Field commanders were thus confronted with the dilemma of continuously having to decide between carrying out operations at their front or at their rear. The problem of countering guerrilla activity proved to be insoluble because, from the very beginning, the Germans approached it defensively.

Germans Gain Experience With Antiguerilla Operations

German counter guerrilla operations may be divided into three phases coinciding with the development of the Soviet partisan movement: June-December 1941, January-August 1942, and September 1942-July 1944.

During the first phase, the Germans had an important advantage in that the partisans did not have the support of the people. Many elements of the population hoped to win German support so as to achieve at least a modest degree of political freedom, while the masses of the people were passive and did not oppose the occupation.

Most guerrilla activities were on a small-unit scale and German counteroperations generally did not involve units larger than divisions. Indeed, in most cases only battalions and regiments were involved. German tactics generally consisted of guarding main lines of communications and applying normal security precautions at headquarters and installations. When partisan bands caused trouble in specific areas, the Germans launched a large-scale attack that

usually succeeded in dispersing or eliminating them. The ratio of partisans to antiguerrilla forces in these engagements averaged about one to eight. The usual tactical maneuver was encirclement and concentric attack. These tactics were most successful in the Ukraine, where the terrain and the relatively small number of partisans favored the German approach. They were least effective in the central and northern sectors of the conquered areas, where large numbers of partisans were operating.

Germans Codify Their Tactics

By the fall of 1941, enough first-hand experience had been gathered that the army high command could issue guidelines for antiguerrilla warfare. These reflected the situation at the time and proposed tactical remedies, but did not take into sufficient account the underlying causes of the partisan movement, which were political, psychological, and economic. In any case, it was impossible for the army to adopt measures that would counteract the political blunders of Nazi functionaries in the occupied areas.

The army high command distinguished five types of antiguerrilla measures. Pacification operations, involving the complete occupation by troop detachments of all significant localities in a partisan-controlled area, were effective but time-consuming and exceeded the army's capability. Large-scale operations, in which partisan groups were encircled and destroyed by far superior forces through concentric maneuver, were also an effective method, provided enough troops could be assembled to draw a tight ring around the guerrillas and their stronghold. Small-scale operations usually consisted of attacks by relatively small-unit strike forces on specific objectives, such as guerrilla armed camps; such attacks made the utmost use of the elements of surprise and prior intelligence. Mopping-up operations, employed after a partisan unit had been broken up by some other action, were intended to clear an area or supply line. The establishment of strongpoints was a defensive measure designed to protect certain localities containing troops, headquarters, or supplies and was used most often along lines of communications.¹⁶

Germans Recruit Local People Who Do Not Support Partisans

In areas under its control, the German army soon resorted to recruiting indigenous formations, which were quite successfully employed in police and guard duty and in intelligence work. A wide variety of units was organized, among them the auxiliary guard and service troops (Hilfswachmannschaften or "Hiwi's"), engineer groups, and local auxiliary police (Ordnungsdienst). The Germans also made extensive use of locally recruited agents (Vertrauensleute or "V-Leute"). These indigenous forces materially assisted local administration, conserved German manpower, and helped to restrict partisan activities.

During the first phase of counter guerrilla operations, in the last half of 1941, the Germans were successful because the partisans were unorganized and the people did not support them. It

was a period of experimentation for the Germans. There was not enough time, however, to apply the new guidelines before one of the worst winters in Russian history combined with German military defeats to frustrate such gains as the Germans had been able to make against the guerrillas.

As Winter Sets In, Army Commanders Stress Intelligence and Psyops

The second phase of counterguerilla operations began with the German halt before Moscow in December 1941. Throughout the winter months, it took every ounce of German strength and every last man to hold the front and to guard the tenuous supply lines. Large areas in the armies' rear were thus stripped of garrisons and fell prey to the partisans. Disintegration of sections along the German front allowed the Russians to establish corridors to many partisan areas. The three largest stronghold positions were east and northwest of Vitebsk, north and south of Bryansk, and in the Yelnya-Dorogobuzh area south of the Smolensk-Vyazma railroad.

German commanders, meantime, had begun to apply the new doctrine and techniques in an effort to counter the growing partisan threat. They improved their intelligence capabilities through radio intelligence, reconnaissance prisoner interrogations, and agents. Commanders were therefore generally well informed about partisan strength, dispositions, and intentions.

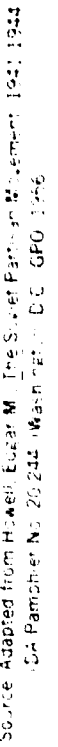
The German army also made progress in some of its propaganda efforts. For the first time, promises were given that the lives of commissars would be spared if they surrendered; and this policy sometimes brought unexpectedly good results. Within their narrow jurisdictions, some field armies unofficially instituted a policy of encouraging defections. Psychological advantages also accrued from the fact that many Russians served the Germans in indigenous police units.

Limitations on Antiguerilla Operations

In counterguerilla operations the Germans were hampered by limitations of strength. Their operations had to be highly selective and, since they required the use of sorely needed combat forces that had to be withdrawn temporarily from the front, could be launched only when the situation had become critical, or when results appeared to be extraordinarily promising.

By the spring of 1942, rear area commanders were no longer able to cope with the partisan threat to their lines of communications. The Germans were now forced to commit entire combat divisions, supplemented by security and indigenous forces and supported by planes, in carefully planned and meticulously executed encirclement operations, if they wished to pacify a large partisan-controlled area. They tried to compensate for the shortage of troops with intensive air raids and strafing of recognized partisan strongholds. In addition to the physical damage that could be inflicted on base camps, air attacks appeared to be effective in breaking down partisan morale. But the Luftwaffe never had enough planes to exploit this opportunity.

24 May-22 June 1942



Operation HANNOVER Breaks Up Soviet Group Belov

A good example of the type of large-scale operations the Germans launched in the spring and summer of 1942 was Operation HANNOVER. The Germans committed elements of three corps, with seven divisions and numerous smaller units, numbering 18,000 to 20,000 men,* under the direction of the Fourth Army. They were deployed against Soviet Group Belov, consisting of an estimated 18,000 partisans and regular forces that the Red army had infiltrated.

The area in which Soviet Group Belov held complete control was located southwest of Vynxma, between Yelnya and Dorogobuzh. It measured about 70 miles in length and 40 miles across. To eliminate Belov, the Germans encircled the entire area; then, in operations lasting a full month (May 24 to June 22, 1942), they attacked from three sides, driving the partisans against the Fourth, pinching off sizable elements in two successive encirclements, before pushing the remnants against a final blocking position. The hard core of Belov's group broke out of the tightening ring during the last phase, but most were wiped out in subsequent pursuit. The Germans inflicted casualties of about 16,000, including over 5,000 killed, and they captured or destroyed 16 tanks, 251 guns, and 15 planes. Approximately 2,000 guerrillas somehow managed to hide.

The Germans followed up the operation with a program of political pacification, which was greatly simplified by the fact that few males were left in the area. Efforts were made to win the support of the inhabitants and convince them that their lot would be eased if they cooperated by forming self-defense units and reporting partisans to the German authorities. These efforts were so successful that the Soviet command was unable to revive the partisan movement in this area despite repeated efforts.

Nevertheless, the Germans paid heavily for their success. They lost about 500 men killed and 1,500 wounded or missing—less than 15 percent of partisan losses but 10 percent of their own strength. The fact that Belov and his closest collaborators were able to escape proved to the Germans that they had not concentrated enough troops for the initial operation. The operation also showed that, given adequate resources, time, and support, regular troops could eliminate the partisans even in forbidding terrain. On the other hand, it should be pointed out that Operation HANNOVER was not representative of the German counterguerrilla effort. It showed what could be done under favorable circumstances, but these did not prevail in most of the German rear areas. In the sectors under its jurisdiction, the German army had developed new and efficient methods, but it lacked sufficient means to apply them. The army was thus unable to destroy the partisans before the Russian armies took the offensive.

*At that time German divisions were at best about half strength.

As Germans Begin To Pull Back, They Come Increasingly Into Conflict With Partisans

The last phase of German counterguerrilla operations began in the fall of 1942. German armies had reached as far as the Caucasus and Stalingrad, but then the fortunes of war changed. Stalingrad was the flaming signal. On February 2, 1943, 22 German divisions, reduced to 280,000 men and cut off at Stalingrad from the rest of the German army, surrendered. From then on the Red army steadily rolled back the German lines. The great withdrawal began at the western approach to the Volga and ended in the summer of 1944 on the banks of the Vistula. As the German army fell back, it crowded into areas where the partisans had thrived with relative impunity. Although German supply lines were now shorter and should have been easier to guard, the partisan movement had grown into a more formidable threat. The Germans countered with a series of large-scale antiguerrilla operations and intensification of local antipartisan actions. To conserve their own forces, they used non-German Axis troops in security missions, and recruited and employed indigenous units.

The German army had learned during the winter crisis of 1941-42 that only aggressive tactics could check the partisans. Holding garrisons and outposts, perfunctorily patrolling partisan-infested areas, and making occasional sweeps or stabs at recognized strongholds meant remaining permanently on the defensive. It had become abundantly clear that rear area security troops alone could not contain the guerrillas. Combat troops had to be committed, pressure maintained, and the support of the people won.

Hitler Approves a New Army Policy But German Authority Remains Divided

Some steps in the right direction had already been taken. The army staff had made the first move in the spring of 1941 by enjoining subordinate commands to refrain from indiscriminate collective reprisals. In August 1942, the army high command shifted the responsibility for counterguerrilla operations from the chief of supply and administration to the deputy chief of staff for operations. This decision reflected the fact that counterguerrilla operations had become as vital as operations at the front and acknowledged that both areas of operations were interdependent. Experience also had shown that tactical commanders were more eager to commit combat forces in antipartisan operations if they were given control.

Hitler sanctioned the new army policy on August 18, 1942.¹⁷ Not only was the war against the partisans to be considered a part of general operations, but military means were to be combined with political, economic, and psychological measures. In an attempt to pacify an increasingly hostile population, assurances were to be given of at least a minimum subsistence level in the standard of living, and rewards were to be offered to those who would collaborate against the guerrillas. Reluctantly, Hitler also approved the recruitment of native Russians for the

formation of indigenous military and paramilitary units—which had in a number of cases already been quietly accomplished—and their commitment in counter guerrilla operations.¹⁸

Although control of operations was placed in the hands of tactical commanders and the dual chain of command in the military establishment had thus been abolished, division of responsibility persisted outside the army combat zone and rear areas. Behind these, Himmler was given sole responsibility for all antipartisan actions, operating through the reich commissars and the military governors. The authority of the SS was also broadened to encompass the collection and evaluation of all intelligence on the partisan movement.

A Series of New Moves To Counter the Partisan Warfare

To overcome the perennial shortage of security forces, Hitler ordered army training and replacement units, schools, and air force ground installations redeployed from Germany to areas under partisan pressure. He directed that security forces that had been pressed into frontline duty be returned to their primary function. The term "partisan," connoting freedom fighter, was to be replaced by "bandit," in a psychological move designed to discredit the guerrillas.

Himmler and the Armed Forces High Command (OKW) both issued formal directives on specific tactics and procedures for counter guerrilla operations in September and November 1942.¹⁹ The most important of these new instructions dealt with intelligence, population control, and the use of indigenous personnel. Tactics remained essentially unchanged.

The most useful source of German intelligence was the monitoring of Soviet radio broadcasts; interrogations of local residents and agents' reports often filled in essential details about Soviet intentions. To seek out partisan units and test the loyalty of the inhabitants, the Germans formed mock partisan bands. All residents were registered and the movements of non-residents controlled.

A Network of Strongpoints and Armed Interlocking Villages Protected by Local Units

The Germans originated a system of interlocking strongpoints along main supply arteries and raised self-defense units in the villages under their administration. They were thus able to spread a network of armed villages (Wehrdörfer)—precursors of strategic hamlets—across many districts, and they reinforced the system by providing reliable signal communications.

~~In an extension of their strongpoint system, they declared that strips up to 10 miles wide along~~
the supply routes were security zones and patrolled them with mobile commando groups (Jagdkommandos).

In villages the Germans raised auxiliary police forces (Ordnungsdienst or OD) to maintain order and provide local security under the direction of appointed mayors. In regions under

heavy partisan pressure, the OD was reinforced by militia units (Milizgruppen) of up to battalion strength. The objective was to provide each district with one militia battalion, subsequently renamed civil guard (Volkswehr) battalion. The expansion of the militia led in 1943 to the establishment of the Osttruppen or eastern troops, which resembled a foreign legion.

The number of indigenous forces could be quite impressive, as the example of the larger Bryansk area shows. The eastern portion of the Bryansk area, under the control of the Second Panzer Army, had 13 eastern troop and 12 civil guard battalions. In the western portion, under the control of Army Group Center, the 221st Security Division built 119 armed villages and manned them with 10,000 OD men.²⁰

Experiments in Local Autonomy: Kaminsky and Vlasov

In the Lokot district, some 50 miles south of Bryansk, Hitler had in one instance already permitted an experiment in quasi-autonomous government. A Russian collaborator by the name of Bronislav Kaminsky took charge of the district and formed a brigade of 12 battalions. Disciplined, mobile, and well armed, Kaminsky's followers numbered 9,000 men by the fall of 1942. With this force, he not only kept his own district free of partisans, but supplied German authorities with antipartisan units for employment in neighboring districts. While it lasted, the district was a model of successful antipartisan control achieved by gaining the support of the people.²¹

Another opportunity for rallying the Russian people in the occupied territories was handed the Germans when captured Gen. Andrei A. Vlasov lent himself to form a movement and army known by his name. It was to be organized from among Russian prisoners of war for the purpose of uniting all Russians in an anti-Communist state. Although Vlasov had some success, especially in the field of psychological warfare, the very existence of such a movement ran counter to Hitler's long-range plans. Not until 1944, when it was much too late, did Vlasov obtain official German recognition.

Germans Fail To Exploit Russian Grievances

The German failure to exploit fully and completely the various collaborative indigenous movements was a singular mistake in itself, but it betrayed the basic Nazi view that the Slavs were Untermenschen, or inferior people. German activity in a number of spheres—the harsh treatment of prisoners of war, the cruel administration of forced labor, the unalleviated food shortages, the closing of local schools—provided realistic corroboration of their basic attitude toward the local peoples.

Given this view of the Slavs, it is not surprising that the Germans failed to take advantage of perhaps the principal means by which they might have obtained widespread popular support—by dividing the Soviet collective farms among the peasants, the largest population group in the

occupied zone. Plans for land reform were sporadically implemented, with some success, during 1941, and agrarian reform actually became policy in February 1942. In the areas under Nazi administration, land reform was often viewed coldly, but some reforms were instituted in army areas. In general, the reforms were poorly conceived and, in practice, the initially anti-Soviet peasant—who, under the Germans as under the Soviets, could not own land but had to meet crop quotas—was unable to perceive any advantage in a foreign administration. Even the religious issue was not exploited by the Germans; for example, German chaplains were not allowed to minister to the local population. The effect of these policies was to confirm the Soviet population's utter disillusionment with the Germans. With the battle for popular support lost through conditions beyond its control, the German army turned to military means to combat the partisan menace.

Large-Scale Operations Against Guerrillas in the Bryansk Area

Typical examples of counter guerrilla operations in 1943 are provided by actions the Second Panzer Army took in May and June of that year in the Bryansk area. During the twelve months preceding May 1943, the Germans had eliminated an estimated 5,000 guerrillas and had evacuated several thousand local residents. However, in the spring of 1943, the partisans were averaging 80 attacks a month, mostly against lines of communications—some 550 miles of roads and railroads. None of these attacks crippled German supply, but about half of them caused delays of up to twelve hours. Partisan strength in the greater Bryansk area fluctuated between 10,000 and 20,000, with half concentrated in the forests south of the town and the other half unevenly divided between the northern and western sectors. They were supported by a large number of local sympathizers. The partisans presented a great danger to the Germans in the event of a general Soviet offensive in the area, and the Second Panzer Army realized that it must deal with this threat while it could.

The panzer army planned five separate, coordinated, and large-scale operations for May and June 1943, committing an estimated 50,000 men. The two largest and most effective operations were FREISCHÜTZ, north of Bryansk, and ZIGEUNERBARON, in the southern forest. Both were executed by regular combat forces, each under an army corps. The panzer army had little time to plan the operations because the troops were needed for the planned German summer offensive at Orel; nor could enough troops be assigned to accomplish a thorough clean-up operation. Military operations were further complicated by the planned evacuation of very large contingents of the local population. In what had become a standard procedure, the partisan units were encircled and then driven against a terrain feature selected as the best blocking position. Generally, the partisans at first avoided being drawn into a set-piece battle and withdrew. When cornered, the hard core and the leaders broke out and escaped, but not without suffering very severe personnel and materiel losses and the destruction of their camps.

In the five operations in the Bryansk forests, the Germans killed or captured some 7,000 partisans and evacuated about 35,000 inhabitants, while losing some 200 killed and 600 wounded. The bands were routed and dispersed, losing their strongholds and their sources of food, shelter, and supplies. But about half of the partisans got away. With massive Soviet support, delivered mainly by air, they reorganized and attempted to resume their activities within a few weeks. The punier army, however, kept up the pressure with a series of eight smaller operations into June. Given more troops, time, and air support, the Germans might have eliminated the remaining partisans, who were now deprived of their supporting population. But events at the front precluded full commitment and exploitation.

Defense of Lines of Communications During the German Withdrawal

The war in Russia, now stretching into its third year, cut deeper and deeper into the German army's strength. The attrition showed most revealingly in the reduced quality and capabilities of security forces and air force. The Luftwaffe was no longer able to prevent reinforcement and supply of the partisan movement, an effort to which the Soviet command committed more and more of its air strength.

To hold their own, the Germans were forced to employ increasing numbers of security units: some 150 German battalions, 90 collaborator battalions, 30 satellite battalions, and about 50,000 indigenous auxiliary police, which added up to about a quarter of a million men. In addition, Hitler was compelled to shift ten training and reserve divisions to the rear areas in the east. These military security measures succeeded in keeping the German supply lines open and rear installations reasonably safe during the final German withdrawal from Russia. The achievement was limited, but the requirements of fighting a total war and the restrictions under which the army had to operate made it impossible to pacify the occupied areas.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

The three-year struggle between the Soviet partisans and the German occupation forces was decided by the victory of the Red army over the Wehrmacht. In this victory, Soviet guerrillas aided the Soviet army. The significance of Russian partisan warfare lay in the fact that it emerged as a new weapon, to be reckoned with henceforth as an instrument of strategy and even of national policy.

The Russians in 1941 had been quick to realize the potential of a partisan movement and had employed it with determination in both defensive and offensive operations. Partisan activities may be judged by their objectives and the degree of their accomplishments.

Partisan Objectives and Achievements Reviewed

Partisan objectives were military, economic, and political in nature. Military missions were to harass the occupation forces, inflict maximum damage on installations and communications, and gather intelligence. The economic objective was to reduce or prevent German exploitation of the occupied areas. The political aim was to maintain the allegiance to the Soviet Union and its Communist regime of the Russian population under German domination.

The Soviet partisans were most successful in their military objectives. By adopting an organization and chain of command suitable to the missions of the partisan movement and the environment in which it had to operate, the Soviet leadership in effect created a fourth service and used it as a formidable weapon against the German invaders. Guerrillas killed an estimated 35,000 occupation troops, executed innumerable acts of sabotage, and provided valuable intelligence. But their main achievement lay in their continued presence behind German lines, where they spread insecurity, fear, and terror. They forced the Germans to assign tens of thousands of security troops to the never-ending task of protecting communications and rear area installations, and to divert combat divisions from the front. The partisans accomplished this at a small expense to the Soviet war effort because the hundreds of thousands of Russians in the occupied territories could not have served their country's cause in any other way.

Nevertheless, the partisan movement had its limitations. It could persist because the Germans failed to deal with it effectively. Partisans could operate only in favorable terrain and with massive outside support. The rapid growth of the movement diluted its units and made them vulnerable to German countermeasures. Large units lost their mobility and often were trapped in encirclements by regular forces. In such battles the partisans were invariably defeated and their usefulness, even if they avoided destruction, was greatly impaired, usually for long periods of time.

In the economic field, the partisans were unable to reduce materially the German exploitation of the country, largely because they did not control the economically vital areas such as the big cities and especially the Ukraine.

The success of the partisan movement in maintaining a political hold over the population in occupied areas was not so much the result of adroitness as of intimidation and, above all, the stupidity and ruthlessness of German occupation policies. Even so, more than a million Soviet citizens actively collaborated with the Germans; and millions more, by their indifference and passivity, abetted Nazi designs.

Some Lessons From the German Experience

The Germans, on the other hand, had initially underestimated the threat that guerrillas might present to their rear area security. When the danger suddenly became real, they lacked the techniques and the means to meet the challenge. Preoccupied with tactical operations and

hampered by a lack of manpower, their counterguerrilla operations and security measures were palliative, largely designed to keep the disease from spreading, but not to eliminate its causes.

A basic reason for the German failure in counterguerrilla operations lay in Hitler's policies of exploiting the occupied areas whatever the cost to the Soviet population. Militarily, German antiguerrilla efforts were hurt by Hitler's insistence on dividing responsibility between military and political agencies. The lack of central direction was compounded by inconsistent policies, a dismal shortage of troops, and an essentially defensive attitude. The Germans did little to compensate for the partisans' advantage of favorable terrain.

The early decision to bypass the swamps and forests and the subsequent failure to clean them out thoroughly proved to be mistakes that could not be remedied. Vital lines of communications cut through these very regions and thus were vulnerable to partisan attacks. The device of building strongpoints and clearing strips astride the main supply routes seemed to be the answer to making the supply lines secure, but the Germans never had the forces to fully implement this technique.

The Germans could not cut off outside support for the partisans, and they could not isolate them from their local support, whether voluntary or impressed. Most importantly, the Germans failed to create a climate of confidence and trust between themselves and the Russian people. Under these circumstances, the most effective German measures proved to be large-scale counterguerrilla operations and the establishment of armed villages protected by indigenous militia and civil guard units, backed by German security forces.

In World War II the Soviets used guerrilla warfare as a weapon in support of their regular army in both defensive and offensive operations. Since then, the Soviets have both fought insurgents in areas under their control and supported guerrilla warfare as a tool of insurgency in various non-Communist countries. In these new applications, the Communists have drawn upon many of the techniques used in World War II; it is to be hoped that the free world will also benefit from both the lessons and mistakes of the German experience in Russia.

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¹Edgar M. Howell, The Soviet Partisan Movement 1941-1944 (DA Pamphlet 20-244; Washington: Department of the Army, 1950), p. 203.

²Theodore Shabad, Geography of the U.S.S.R., A Regional Survey (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951).

³The "Background" section is based primarily on Charles V. P. von Luttichau, Guerrilla and Counter guerrilla Warfare in Russia During World War II (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1962), ch. 1.

⁴Department of the Army Pamphlets: No. 20-290, Terrain Factors in the Russian Campaign (Washington: Department of the Army, 1951); No. 20-291, Effects of Climate on Combat in European Russia (Washington: Department of the Army, 1952); and No. 20-231, Combat in Russian Forests and Swamps (Washington: Department of the Army, 1951).

⁵OKH, GenStdK, General der Pioniere und Festungen beim ObdH, Denkschrift über russische Landesbefestigungen (Berlin: Reichsdrucker, 1942), pp. 2ff.

⁶See statements by Reich Marshal Hermann Goering (pp. 239, 240), Alfred Rosenberg (p. 241), Himmler (p. 237), etc., re German disinterest in the welfare of occupied Soviet citizens, cited in International Military Tribunal, Trial of the Major War Criminals Before the International Military Tribunal (Nuremberg: International Military Tribunal, 1947), I, pp. cited above and *passim*.

⁷The text of this address is reproduced in Joseph Stalin, The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union (New York: International Publishers, 1945), pp. 9-17.

⁸Von Luttichau, Guerrilla and Counter guerrilla Warfare in Russia, pp. 50-51; and A. Fyodorov, The Underground Carries On (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1952), p. 15.

⁹Von Luttichau, Guerrilla and Counter guerrilla Warfare in Russia, *passim*. Except where another source is cited, the material that follows is based on this work.

¹⁰John Armstrong and Kurt DeWitt, Organization and Control of the Partisan Movement (Columbia University, War Documentation Project (WDP) "Alexander," Research Study No. 6, Vol. 4; Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air Research and Development Command, Human Resources Research Institute, 1954); Earl Ziemke, The Soviet Partisan Movement in 1941 (Columbia University, War Documentation Project "Alexander," Research Study No. 6, Vol. 2; Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air Research and Development Command, Human Resources Research Institute, 1954).

¹¹See Gerhard L. Weinberg (ed.), Selected Soviet Sources on the Partisan Movement in World War II (Columbia University, War Documentation Project "Alexander," Research Memorandum No. 26, Vol. 1; Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air Research and Development Command, Human Resources Research Institute, 1954), Docs. 1-7.

¹²Armstrong and DeWitt, Organization and Control, pp. 13-44; Howell, The Soviet Partisan Movement, pp. 77-85, 93-96.

¹³Fyodorov, The Underground Carries On, pp. 511ff.

¹⁴George E. Blau, The German Campaign in Russia, Planning and Operations, 1940-1942 (DA Pamphlet No. 20-261a; Washington: Department of the Army, 1951).

¹⁵Entwürfe zum Kriegstagebuch des Wehrmachtsführungsstabes (Abteilung Landesverteidigung) vom 1. 12. 1940-42. 3. 1941, by Ministerialrat Helmuth Greiner (U.S. Department of the Army, Office, Chief of Military History, MS No. C-005-k); Howell, The Soviet Partisan Movement, pp. 9-23; and Trial of the Major War Criminals, Doc. No. 221-L, in XXXVIII, pp. 86-94.

¹⁶ObdH, GenStH, Ausb. Abt., "Richtlinien für Partisanenbekämpfung," 25 Oct. 41; EAP 99/38-X/4, cited in Ziemke, The Soviet Partisan Movement in 1941, pp. 73-74.

¹⁷Directive No. 46, "Richtlinien für die verstärkte Bekämpfung des Bandenunwesens im Osten, 19 Aug. 42," in U.S. Navy ONI Führer Directives and Other Top Level Directives of the German Armed Forces, 1939-1945.

¹⁸OKH, GenStH, Org. Abt., Kriegstagebuch, Band IV, I. 8.-31. 12. 42, 11-20 Aug. 42; H1/214.

¹⁹Howell, The Soviet Partisan Movement, pp. 118-20, n. 8 and 12.

²⁰Kurt DeWitt and Wilhelm Moll, The Partisan Movement in the Bryansk Area, 1941-1943 (Columbia University, War Documentation Project "Alexander," Technical Research Report No. 24, Vol. 6; Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air Research and Development Command, Human Resources Research Institute, 1954), pp. 64-69.

²¹When the Germans were forced to evacuate the area, they resettled Kaminsky and his followers—8,000 soldiers and 25,000 civilians. See Dallin, The Kaminsky Brigade: 1941-1944 (Columbia University, War Documentation Project "Alexander," Technical Research Report No. 7; Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University, 1952); Howell, The Soviet Partisan Movement, p. 89.

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Chapter Eleven

**YUGOSLAVIA
1941-1944**

by Earl Ziemke

¹⁰Dik Lehmkuhl, Journey to London: The Story of the Norwegian Government at War (London: Hutchinson and Co., Ltd., 1947), pp. 122-24.

¹¹Philip Paneth, Haakon VII: Norway's Fighting King (London: Alliance Press, Ltd., 1944), pp. 95-98.

¹²Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," p. 546; and Lehmkuhl, Journey to London, p. 124.

¹³See Margret Boveri, Treason in the Twentieth Century, tr. Jonathan Steinberg (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1963), pp. 64-79, for a discussion of Quisling's personality, motivation, and aims.

¹⁴Quoted in Boveri, Treason in the Twentieth Century, p. 69.

¹⁵See Raeder testimony, in IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XIV, 92-93.

¹⁶See Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," pp. 534-38, for events between April 9, 1940, and February 1, 1942.

¹⁷International Military Tribunal, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XIV, 100, for Raeder's testimony at trials.

¹⁸Terboven, quoted in The Times, October 6, 1941, cited in Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," n. 6, p. 540.

¹⁹Quisling, quoted in Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," n. 1, p. 538.

²⁰Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," p. 543.

²¹Norway: A Handbook, pp. 56-59.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., pp. 46ff.

²⁴Quoted in Norway: A Handbook, pp. 59-60.

²⁵These and other moves are analyzed in Norway: A Handbook, pp. 56, 64, 78-79. See also Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," p. 537 and n. 5, p. 540; and Clifton J. Child, "The Political Structure of Hitler's Europe—Administration," in Toynbee and Toynbee, eds., Hitler's Europe, p. 120.

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²⁷Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," pp. 540, 542.

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²⁹Royal Norwegian Government, Preliminary Report, in IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XXXIX, 212; Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," n. 1, p. 544; and interview, October 10, 1963, with Mr. E. Haslund-Halvorsen of Oslo, an inmate of a large Norwegian camp for nearly three years.

³⁸Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," pp. 535-36.

³⁹Quoted in IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XIV, 101.

⁴⁰Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," pp. 542, 544-45.

⁴¹Lehmkuhl, Journey to London, pp. 124-35.

⁴²Interview, October 10, 1963, with Mrs. Ebba Haslund of Oslo, who spent the occupation years in a small Norwegian town under German rule. A prominent literary figure today, she began writing during those years of enforced inactivity.

⁴³Chilston, "The Occupied Countries," p. 546.

⁴⁴Johnson, Norway, pp. 444-52.

⁴⁵Ibid., pp. 223-28; and Royal Norwegian Government, Preliminary Report, in IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XXXIX, 214.

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Chapter Nine

**POLAND
1939-1944**

by James L. Kirkman



Chapter Nine
POLAND (1939-1944)

by James L. Kirkman

When there developed a widespread and well-organized resistance to challenge the Nazi "New Order" in Poland, the German occupiers countered with collective punishment and special military tactics; they were successful to the extent that insurgent military capability was contained and only the Soviet military advance was able to dislodge the Nazis from the country.

BACKGROUND

The name Poland derives from the Slavic word pole, meaning "field," an appropriate description of the country since 90 percent of the country's terrain is flat or rolling. Elevation seldom exceeds 1,000 feet above sea level. In 1939 Poland comprised an area of some 141,075 square miles, equivalent in size to the state of Montana, and almost every section was inhabited. It was traversed by transportation routes, but vehicular movement was difficult in the forests and marshes in the northern part of the country. With the richest soil, the best drainage, and the most mineral deposits, southern Poland was more developed both agriculturally and industrially than the north.

Of Poland's 1939 population of about 35 million, approximately 10 million persons lived in urban areas—Warsaw alone had about 1.25 million residents. Most of the population belonged to one of three ethnic groups: there were about 24.5 million ethnic Poles, 3.5 million Ukrainians, and 3 million Jews. Of the remaining 4 million, about 700,000 were Germans. Unfortunately, antagonisms within and among these groups hampered social cohesion in interwar Poland and later precluded a fully unified resistance to the Nazi occupation. In the interwar period both the Ukrainians and Jews had their own political parties to express their cultural and, in the case of the Ukrainians, national separatist aspirations.¹

Political Activities and Views of Ethnic Poles

Discord also existed among the ethnic Poles. This gave rise in the 1920's to numerous party factions, fluid party coalitions, and frequent ~~turnovers~~ ^{changes} in government. In 1926, however, control of both houses of the parliament passed to the authoritarian-oriented Non-Party Bloc, and the president of the Republic was made a virtual dictator. The Non-Party Bloc, dominant

during the 1930's, fostered anti-Semitism, passed electoral laws unfavorable to all ethnic minorities, frequently imprisoned opposition leaders, and increased the influence of the military in national affairs. The four major parties—the Peasant party, the Socialist party, the Christian Democratic party, and the Nationalist party—were excluded from the government. They boycotted some elections, but organized no subversive activity.²

In spite of their differences, ethnic Poles were united in two important respects. First, they were almost unanimous in withholding support from the Polish Communist Party, whose membership reportedly totaled around 8,000, although some estimates are higher.³ One reason is that the party was opposed by the vigorous and influential Polish Catholic Church. Also, because of the party's pro-Soviet orientation and activities during the Polish-Soviet War of 1920-21, it was distrusted by most Poles.*⁴ Second, practically all ethnic Poles were fervent nationalists. They had gained independence in 1918 after more than 100 years of nationalistic agitation and occasional outbreaks, and resistance to a foreign occupier was part of the folklore. Contemporary Poles had acquired some knowledge of insurrectionary techniques through acquaintance with Polish classical literature and nonfiction accounts of past Polish insurrections and, in a few instances, through personal participation in resistance activities before 1918.⁵

Germans Occupy Poland in Two Stages and Divide It Three Ways

In September-October 1939 Poland was overrun by the Germans, and top government and opposition leaders fled to France as the Nazi German occupation began. At first the Nazis occupied only the western half of the country, the Soviets having moved into the eastern part in September 1939, after prior agreement with the Germans. In their half, the Germans detached the four westernmost Polish provinces, plus some Polish territory around East Prussia, and incorporated them into the Reich. This area contained roughly 10 million inhabitants, 650,000 of whom were ethnic Germans. The remaining four Polish provinces under German control in 1939 were placed under the personal rule of the German Reich's Law Leader, Hans Frank II, and eventually termed the General Government. The 1939 population of this area was approximately 12 million, of whom 60,000 to 75,000 were ethnic Germans.

After the German attack on the Soviet Union in June 1941 the former Soviet zone of Poland also came under German occupation. One part was incorporated into the Reich, another was included in the General Government, and the remainder was treated as part of either the Reich Commissariat for the "East Land" or the Reich Commissariat for the Ukraine.†⁶

*Ironically, Polish Communists in the interwar period were considered too nationalistic by the Soviets. In 1937-38 Stalin conducted a purge of the Polish Communist Party's leadership, and in 1938 the Comintern formally announced the dissolution of the party. It was not reconstituted until early 1942, and then as the Polish Workers Party.

†Since little is known about Nazi policy or countermeasures vis-à-vis the Poles in the Commissariats, this paper will not cover activities in these areas.

Nazi Racial Theories Denigrate Poles

The Poles had little working in their favor as the occupation began. They had been classified by the Nazis as Untermenschen, or subhumans, and were unlucky enough to occupy land previously marked by Nazi ideologues as destined to receive the first wave of German colonizers sent out to alleviate the German lebensraum problem. And the Nazi Fuehrer Adolf Hitler's directions to Frank in early October 1939, as recorded by Martin Bormann,* sealed the Poles' fate:

The Poles are especially born for low labor . . . there can be no question of improvement for them. . . . The Poles are lazy and it is necessary to use compulsion to make them work. . . . The Government General should be used by us merely as a source of unskilled labor . . . the Polish gentry must cease to exist . . . wherever they are, they must be exterminated; there should be one master only for the Poles—the German; . . . all representatives of the Polish intelligentsia are to be exterminated. This sounds cruel, but such is the law of life. [Priests will] preach what we want them to preach. If any priest acts differently, we shall make short work of him. The task of the priest is to keep the Poles quiet, stupid, and dull-witted.⁷

Hitler's words, though directed in this case to Frank in the General Government, were just as relevant for Nazi officials in the annexed provinces, for all Poles were subject to this overall policy. However, there was a certain amount of differentiation in the treatment of Poles in the two parts, and this followed from the unique role assigned to each. Since the incorporated area was made an integral part of the Reich and settled immediately by ethnic Germans, it underwent the most intense and unbending "Germanization." In the General Government section, the suppression and regulation of Polish life was slightly less severe but was certainly greater than in most other Nazi-occupied areas of Europe: it never had a puppet government, it was designated as an area of future German colonization, it was relegated and kept to the economic function of merely providing cheap labor and foodstuffs, and it was subjected to persistent and almost unmatched hardships and liquidations. The area was often referred to in German releases as "the Reich's own land."

Hans Frank, Ruler of the General Government Area

In Cracow, Governor General Frank worked with unlimited powers and complete loyalty to implement this policy, assisted directly by four district governors and a higher SS leader attached to his office. At first Frank's rule was indeed almost sovereign. He was responsible only to Hitler, and his sway was recognized by all Nazi officials in both the Reich proper and the General Government. One German observer accurately described the situation in those early days: "Frank was carrying on like a megalomaniacal pasha . . . he let nobody interfere, but ruled like a sovereign. . . ."⁸ And his policy was equally clear cut. A day after Hitler's

* Bormann was Hitler's party deputy, not to be confused with the Fuehrer's designated heir, Hermann Goering.

pronouncement on the Poles, Frank declared to an army official that "Poland shall be treated as a colony; the Poles shall be the slaves of the Greater German World Empire."⁹

The man who justified his boast was, in a number of respects, a Nazi archetype. He was a charter member of the Nazi party, having joined in 1920 at the end of his legal studies. The young Frank's star rose rapidly and he was soon the party's legal expert, able eventually to reinstate his father, a lawyer bearing the same name, who had lived a troubled life and been expelled from the bar for embezzlement. Somewhat exceptional for an early Nazi, Frank was not only well versed in the law but also well acquainted with literature and the fine arts, especially music. He apparently had a witty side and some skill in conversational repartee, even in Italian. An American journalist who knew him felt that Frank's personality made him one of the least repulsive of the top Nazis. Frank was also known in party circles as energetic, Jew-hating, and completely devoted to Hitler.

After acting as the party's defense lawyer in a number of trials during the Weimar period, including the celebrated trial in 1930 at which Hitler himself put in a strategic appearance, Frank went on in the Third Reich to become the Bavarian Minister of Justice and subsequently a Reich Minister Without Portfolio, Reich Commissioner of Justice, President of the Academy of Law and of the German Bar Association, and overall Reich Law Leader. Though he was a lawyer (specifically a barrister), Frank was not constrained by consideration for legal precedents and the rule of law. As he had explained to jurists in 1936, "There is no independence of law against National Socialism. Say to yourselves at every decision which you make: 'How would the Fuehrer decide in my place?'"¹⁰

At the time of his appointment as Governor General at the age of 39, Frank continued with his other already impressive duties. Equally important was ~~the fact~~ that he was also a member of the inner core of the party, the twenty-member Central Directorate (Oberste Reichsleitung).¹¹ His appointment as Governor General clearly indicated the importance attached to that region of Poland. As for the Poles, Frank asserted to subordinates in December 1940,

The Pole here must feel that we are not building for him a State with a rule of law, but that he has one single duty—namely, to work and to be meek. Evidently this sometimes leads to difficulties, but in your own interest you must see to it that all measures be taken ruthlessly, in order to master all this. You can absolutely rely on me. . . .¹²

Suppression of Polish Political and Intellectual Life

The impact of the German policy on the Polish population was immediate, drastic, and pervasive. By the end of the first year changes were introduced in all spheres of activity, and Dr. Frank and his district governors announced to the Poles that henceforth and "forever" they would live under German "protection." In the annexed area all Poles were expelled from public office, and in the General Government part all Polish officials above the municipal, ghetto, and commune levels were dismissed. Those who were allowed to remain in office in the 1,148 municipalities

and in the other local units were closely supervised by the Governor General's district leaders or local commissioners. In the incorporated area all Polish courts were abolished. Although Polish courts were permitted to function in the General Government section, they were restricted to handling nonpolitical cases involving only Poles.¹³

In implementing Hitler's October 1939 directives, the object of Polish education under the occupation became not the spreading of knowledge and theoretical learning but rather the creation of skilled workers in agriculture and industry. Except for some Ukrainians, Polish citizens in both parts were barred from universities, but they were allowed to attend elementary and vocational schools. In this way, a vast skilled-labor pool was to be developed for use by the Reich.¹⁴

Polish intellectuals were systematically imprisoned or otherwise eliminated. In November 1939, more than 200 teachers and assistants at Jagiellonian University in Cracow were arrested. Fourteen died in prison and others died from the effects of imprisonment. Similar treatment took the lives of other Polish professors, including 65 at the University of Poznan.¹⁵

Other actions were taken to suppress Polish culture and self-expression. The occupation authorities confiscated privately owned radios, while selected news items and official announcements were made public through loud speakers. Polish newspapers in the incorporated area were closed and those in the General Government part were brought under censorship. Towns in the annexed provinces were given new German names and use of the Polish language in schools or on signs was forbidden.¹⁶ In the General Government section, Polish legitimate theaters were closed and movie theaters were restricted to showing trivial films or those depicting the greatness of Germany. In this area, publication of any book, journal, diary, or music was prohibited; and Polish bookshops were forbidden to sell books on world affairs or politics.¹⁷

German Economic Policies for Poland

Furthermore, Dr. Frank, this time as a regional official of the Reich's Four-Year Plan—the Nazis never tired of devising new positions and bewildering organizational patterns—implemented measures to eliminate Poles from managerial or entrepreneurial jobs and to relegate the nation to the role of providing cheap labor and foodstuffs for the Reich. The first step entailed not only the expulsion of numerous Poles from their jobs but also the confiscation of banks and industrial property and the closing of many commercial firms. By April 1944, in the commercial sector alone, the process of "rationalizing" the economy had closed about 100,000 out of 130,000 establishments in one section of the annexed part and about 152,000 out of 203,000 retail and wholesale concerns in areas controlled by the General Government.¹⁸ Moreover, factories, machinery, and enterprises seized by the General Government were often dismantled and shipped to Germany. According to Hermann Goering* in October 1939, this physical transfer of property

*Goering wore several hats too. He was then Hitler's designated successor, a field-marshal, and the delegate for the Four-Year Plan.

was to include all facilities not considered "absolutely essential for the maintenance at a low level of the bare existence of the inhabitants." 19

The Poles were forced to produce foodstuffs for export to Germany, a requirement that created great hardship. By September 1941, the Poles in the General Government region were reduced to a bare subsistence level. In that month a medical officer informed Frank that the health of the population had deteriorated because most of them were consuming only 600 calories a day. In 1942 malnutrition reportedly approached famine proportion, yet Frank in that year committed the General Government to increase the deliveries of bread grains to Germany by a half million tons. Poles in the incorporated area probably received a slightly larger food ration, perhaps 10 percent more. 20

Deportation of Forced Labor

The next step, and the one that caused much fright and a greater degree of misery, was the deportation of Poles for forced labor in Germany. In the General Government section, the use of coercion to obtain workers was made official around April 1940. A common procedure thereafter was to cordon off an area and take almost everyone found within the cordon. The raids occurred during day or night and seemed to hit randomly. At times, though, the Governor General may have urged his men to discriminate and seek mainly those in nonessential work or those deemed to be idle. Dr. Frank certainly had been advised that the procedure as followed was "wild and ruthless" and had "badly shaken the feeling of security of the inhabitants." 21

According to German records, by August 1942, 800,000 workers had been sent to Germany from the General Government; by December 1942, 940,000; by June 1943, 1,250,000. An additional 200,000 persons had probably been shipped eastward to Nazi-occupied Russia by the end of 1942. 22 From the incorporated part alone, perhaps 2 to 3 million Poles were forcibly shipped to the farms and factories of the Reich by early 1944. 23

Resettlement of Poles To Accomplish "Germanization" of Poland

A great number of Poles were dislocated by resettlement programs organized for political and racial reasons. Reichsfuehrer SS Heinrich Himmler organized this program, acting in his capacity as the Reich Commissioner for the strengthening of Germanism. Himmler assigned high priority to populating the annexed area of Poland with German workers and farmers and moving out the "foreign races." Accordingly, some one to two million Polish citizens in the incorporated part, including most of the area's Jews, were moved east to the General Government region and were replaced by a somewhat larger number of ethnic Germans settlers. Many, perhaps most, of these deportations occurred during the winter of 1939-40 in weather near 40 degrees below zero. The deportees reportedly were given a day's warning and allowed to take with them a few portable objects. Frank commented that the deportees were not being provided

with food or clothing and that any disturbances would be met with the strictest methods. Later, he remarked that the trains arrived in the General Government area with some cars "overflowing with corpses." ²⁴

Some Poles in the General Government section were also displaced by ethnic German settlers brought there by the "Germanization" program. There were two resettlement programs. The main one was carried out in the winter of 1942-43 around Zamosc and the other in the summer of 1943 around Lublin. In the Zamosc operation alone, 30,000 to 40,000 ethnic Germans were brought in and about 50 percent of the area's native peasants were displaced. Displaced Polish families were broken up, strong members being sent to work in Germany. The Zamosc operation took place on short notice in midwinter. According to Nazi records, such displacement operations resulted in considerable loss of life. ²⁵

A resettlement program in reverse separated "racially good" Polish children from their parents and transported them to Germany to be reared as Germans. An estimated 100,000 to 200,000 children were taken to Germany during the occupation. ²⁶

"Special" Treatment for Jews

Special racial treatment was reserved for the Jews. Heinrich Himmler and his deputy Reinhard Heydrich were in charge of this particularly gruesome and difficult aspect of the occupation. Frank lent his full support and urged the cooperation of his staff, remarking at a top level meeting in December 1941, "As far as the Jews are concerned, I want to tell you quite frankly that they must be done away with in one way or another. . . . Gentlemen, I must ask you to rid yourself of all feeling of pity. We must annihilate the Jews." ²⁷

Most of the 650,000 to 1,000,000 Polish Jews living in the annexed area had been deported to the General Government part, probably in the general 1939-40 deportations of "foreign races" from the incorporated area. In December 1941, just before the extermination program began, Jews in the General Government area probably numbered about 3.5 million,* concentrated in the ghettos of large cities and forbidden to leave under penalty of death. The Jewish ghetto of Warsaw, an area of about 100 square blocks, was enclosed by an eight-foot wall. Inside, as many as 15 persons lived in each room, the electricity was cut off at night, and the food ration fixed at 4.5 pounds of bread per month. ²⁸

The evacuation of the ghettos and extermination of the Jews in Poland began in the spring of 1942, when the Nazis announced that the Jews were being transported to work in the east. In addition to the Jews put to death in extermination camps, many must have died of starvation or illness. The emptying of the Warsaw ghetto, the first night of which saw the indiscriminate

* Roughly a half million of these were non-Polish Jews who had been brought by the Nazis from other occupied countries.

shooting of numerous Jews in their apartments, began in July 1942. At this time there were about 400,000 inhabitants in the ghetto. The regular evacuations were stopped in September 1942, leaving about 80,000 inhabitants in the ghetto, but were resumed in January 1943. By April 1943, when the ghetto uprising began, the ghetto population had been reduced to around 60,000. By January 1944, most Polish Jews had been exterminated. At that time Frank reported that only 100,000 out of 3,500,000 Jews were left in the General Government area.²⁹ This extermination program was not a matter of counterinsurgency but of Nazi racial policy.

INSURGENCY

The indigenous resistance that began immediately after Poland's defeat in September-October 1939 was at first largely uncoordinated. It consisted principally of minor acts of propaganda, sabotage, and sniping by individuals or by small, short-lived groups with such romantic names as "The Avengers."³⁰ There were also some Jewish units engaged in smuggling Jews from the Nazi zone to the Soviet zone.

Early Resistance Organisation Is Formed Mainly by Ethnic Poles

Within six months, however, nationwide underground organizations developed. Significantly, the main ones developed within the framework of the army and of the four major prewar political parties—the Christian Democratic, Nationalist, Peasant, and Socialist parties.³¹ This fact revealed both the basic strength and weakness of the insurgent movement at this stage. On the positive side, the course taken by these elements meant that almost all organizations representing non-Communist ethnic Poles, roughly 70 percent of the total population, were united at least in their common determination to resist the occupation. It is significant in this respect that no group produced at this time or later a major collaborator—a result both of the Polish attitude and lack of a serious German attempt to find one.

On the other hand, nonethnic Poles representing the rest of the population engaged at this time in mainly passive resistance or none at all. Jewish leaders in the first three years largely restricted their illegal activities to those designed to preserve Jewish culture and education: some forbidden schools were maintained, news and information sheets were secretly distributed, and records of Nazi activities and Jewish scholarly endeavors were clandestinely stored.³² This relatively isolated and passive course of the Jews in the ghettos probably resulted from their unpleasant experience with Polish anti-Semitism before the war, the lack of outside aid, their relative freedom within the ghettos, and their extreme vulnerability to Nazi reprisals.

Practically no resistance came from the Ukrainian-Poles or the Polish Communists in the first year or two. Most Ukrainians lived in the Soviet zone and did not come under German control until the latter half of 1941, and even after they came under Nazi administration they

received relatively favorable treatment. Also the anti-Soviet sentiment of many Ukrainians predisposed many to cooperate with the Germans. Reasons for cooperation gradually diminished during the occupation, however, and many Ukrainians in Poland did engage in resistance, though they were never integrated into the resistance movement of the ethnic Poles. At first, Polish Communists remained inactive, not only because of the treaty of nonaggression and cooperation between the Nazi and Soviet governments, but also because of internal party disorganization. Not until January 1942, well after the German attack on the Soviet Union, did the Polish Communists reconstitute their party and begin resistance work. Their actual contribution throughout the occupation was generally minor, although they were able, through adroit propaganda, to get a lot of political mileage from their activities.³³

Insurgent Aims and Strategy

Among the ethnic Polish groups there developed by the spring of 1940 basic consensus concerning political aims and insurgent strategy. This was made possible by the emergence of the major political parties to dominance both within the government-in-exile, led by Gen. Wladyslaw Sikorski, and within the resistance movement in Poland. Rapport was good, since the groups embraced compatible nationalist and basic political orientations. Their aims were the maintenance of Polish nationhood and institutions in Poland, the liberation of the country from both the Nazis and Soviets, and the postwar establishment of a democratic non-Communist state.³⁴ This anti-Communist and anti-Soviet orientation proved to be crucial in its consequences, because the Poles, by both geography and the fortunes of war, were placed largely at the mercy of the Soviets in obtaining needed aid.

The Poles' strategy in early 1940 called for two phases of insurgent operations, an underground phase and a military phase. In the first, the government leaders in exile and the underground leaders in Poland would seek the support of Britain and France in establishing a secret underground "state" in Poland with functioning ministries and headed by a "government delegate." The leaders planned to unify the major insurgent groups by subordinating them to the general direction of the government delegate and the day-to-day coordination of a military officer designated by the government-in-exile. A unified movement would then conduct sabotage and intelligence activities to help the Allies and train secret militias for a future uprising. Furthermore, in Poland a secret council of the major-party heads would act as a parliament of sorts and nominate the man for the government delegate post, the official appointment to be made by the government-in-exile. This council would also administer the finances of the resistance and apportion appointments to secret "state" ministries.³⁵ In the military phase of the insurgency, a general uprising of the secret militias would be timed to coincide with a collapse of the German armies or the Nazi regime, provided that adequate external aid for the insurgents was assured.³⁶ No plans were made at this time for protracted guerrilla warfare.

Organisation and Leadership of the Polish "Home Army"

In 1940-41 the insurgents successfully implemented important aspects of their underground strategy with the formation of a skeleton underground "state" and a united administration for insurgent operations. The latter structure was comprised of the government delegate and his regional assistants, the military commander with his scattered network of subordinate army officers, and the major-party leaders and their council and local organizers. Unfortunately, it never operated smoothly, and rivalry between the political leaders and the military commander revived the old issue of political versus military influence in Polish life. Nevertheless, sufficient unity was achieved to permit the military commander to direct in Warsaw in 1944 a concerted insurrection led by a combined "Home Army," as the Polish-government-sponsored insurgents were eventually known collectively.³⁷

The top posts in the Polish resistance were held by a number of different persons, many of whom were of nominal importance as personalities. These were, however, the leaders responsible for day-to-day coordination of operations during the occupation. The second and third of the four military commanders achieved some renown by virtue of their central roles and long service. These were Gen. "Grot" Rowecki and Gen. Tadeusz "Bor" Komorowski, former colonels in the prewar Polish army. In London there was Prime Minister Wladyslaw Sikorski, perhaps the major Polish wartime figure. After his accidental death in July 1943, Sikorski was succeeded by the colorless but respected Stanislaw Mikolajczyk of the Peasant party.

Problems in Communication

The most serious organizational problem for the insurgents was the maintenance of networks in that area of Poland incorporated into the Reich. Controls there were so stringent and the eventual placement of Germans in Polish homes and neighborhoods so pervasive that the population and insurgents found it extremely difficult to engage in large-scale clandestine work in this area. Also, communication between insurgent leaders in Warsaw and their subordinates in the annexed area was tenuous because of heavy German patrolling along the border separating the General Government from the incorporated area. Consequently, after a few months of activity and many losses in personnel, the insurgent command decided to restrict operations in the Reich part and maintain there only a skeleton staff whose members had German physical features, German-language fluency, and documents attesting to their "German" nationality.³⁸ A similar organizational problem existed in the Soviet part of occupied Poland.

Insurgent Operations Occur Mainly in the General Government Area

Insurgent success was centered mainly in the nonincorporated sections of Poland, where underground and sabotage operations reached an impressive degree of sophistication and intensity in the years 1941-44. Underground "state" ministries succeeded in training a corps of

civil bureaucrats and operating secret schools for Polish children. A 10-court judicial system benched by professional jurists or lawyers tried 2,000 suspected collaborators and handed down 200 death sentences, duly carried out by a population-control section of the insurgent-operations administration. As for propaganda, 200,000 copies of leaflets, newspapers, and other materials were printed and distributed daily; and in Warsaw alone in the second half of 1944, 120,000 training manuals were published. Sabotage operations from January 1941 to July 1944 resulted in the destruction of an estimated 4,326 motor vehicles, 28 aircraft and 1,674 tons of fuel. In the same period 5,733 Germans are reported to have been killed, including both the Higher SS and Police Chief in Poland, and the Nazi director of the Labor Office.³⁹

By 1943-44 approximately 26 separate munitions shops were producing fully one-third of the insurgents' munitions, with stocks of self-manufactured flame-throwers and hand grenades totaling, in the spring of 1944, about 900 and 320,000 items respectively. A reception system was devised that handled drops from over 450 RAF flights. These drops supplied the insurgents with another third of their munitions and 353 special advisers. Intelligence operations were highly developed too. In the years 1942-44 about 300 radio-dispatched intelligence reports as well as a courier-dispatched intelligence summary were sent to London every month. And during all these years resistance membership continued to grow. Sworn members totaled 100,000 in 1941, 300,000 by mid-1943, and 380,000 by August 1944. Most of these members held regular jobs and were organized by occupations.⁴⁰

Jews Prepare To Resist Extermination

Before the Home Army moved up to its military operations phase, the Nazi genocide program prompted the Jews in Poland to engage in open warfare. The immediate cause was the ghetto evacuations, begun in early 1942. As a result of these, many Jews throughout Poland fled to the forests to organize partisan action or fought police in the ghettos.⁴¹ By far the most significant action occurred in the form of a general ghetto uprising in Warsaw in April-May 1943.

As early as the spring and summer of 1942, some Warsaw Jews reportedly carried out a few acts of sabotage and assassination, but serious organizational steps were taken only after the summer evacuations of the ghetto. In October 1942 young Jews of the German-run ghetto factories organized the Jewish Combat Organization (JCO) and began to plan armed resistance against future deportations. Most members were drawn from Zionist, Socialist, and Communist groups. Their leader was 24-year-old Mordechai Anielewicz, a Zionist with a journalistic background. The Jews' single and desperate aim was to make the ghetto evacuation, if and when it was resumed, as costly as possible for the Germans. Their quickly evolved strategy called for construction of suitable defensive positions, procurement of munitions, marshalling of popular ghetto support, and a last-ditch defense.⁴²

Between October 1942 and April 1943, which might be termed an underground phase, Jewish preparations progressed. Often under the guise of constructing the air-raid shelters ordered by occupation authorities, the Jews constructed many subterranean bunkers with interlocking passages and links with the sewers. These comprised both the key defensive positions and a system of lodging, transportation, and communication. When completed, the bunker system was quite elaborate—it contained at least 631 units. Entrances to these hideouts were usually well camouflaged and difficult to detect visually, and they led to rooms situated sometimes as much as seven feet below the ground. Many bunkers housed whole families and were equipped with washing facilities, toilets, and enough food for many weeks.⁴³

It is difficult to assess the Jews' success in obtaining munitions, particularly the quantities acquired. What is more certain is that their arms were mainly small-caliber weapons. According to some reports, the JCO received only 50 large pistols and 50 grenades from the Home Army; other sources believe that the Home Army supplied numerous revolvers, rifles, machine-guns, fuses, explosives, and 1,000 hand grenades. The Communists reportedly contributed 9 revolvers and 5 hand grenades. Most munitions were secured by black-market purchase, raids on German stocks, and self-manufacturing.⁴⁴

In the third area of preparation, the marshalling of popular support, JCO members undertook the distribution of numerous leaflets and entered into discussions and debates at ghetto meetings. They also liquidated several overzealous Jewish police, Gestapo agents, and collaborators. Before definite confirmation of the mass killings of Jewish men, women, and children reached the ghetto in April 1943, this psychological campaign had only limited results; after this date, however, popular support was much more readily given.⁴⁵

The Battle of the Warsaw Ghetto Begins on April 19, 1943

Preparations for resistance were not fully complete in January 1943 when the Germans resumed the evacuations, but a few JCO squads did successfully ambush a German patrol, killing 20 and causing the Nazi authorities to suspend evacuations temporarily. Final preparations were then made by the JCO—squads were drilled, lookouts were posted along the walls, etc.—and the Jews were ready for full-scale action on April 19, 1943, when the Germans re-entered the ghetto. On that day defensive operations began, with the ghetto defenders directing their fire on German patrols from barricades and roof-top positions.⁴⁶

Organized Jewish forces numbered between several hundred and a few thousand, divided into groups of from 20 to 30. The core of the forces were young people 18 to 25 years old. Many were women. In the ensuing battle, which lasted until mid-May, this force was scattered over an area of 100 square blocks. Except for some contingents of the Polish Workers Party, the Labor Zionists, and unsupervised bands, all insurgent groups were unified under JCO command. By and large the Jews fought alone, though Home Army, leftist, and Communist units of unknown size

reportedly helped at times by attacking German positions on the perimeter of the ghetto or fighting with Jewish units in the ghetto. Some help was also received from presumably unarmed Jews who infiltrated into the ghetto from the "Aryan" side after about two weeks of fighting.⁴⁷

The defenders' tactics involved both guerrilla-type offensive action and positional defensive warfare, with the latter being used increasingly as the German sweeps through the ghetto became more devastating. Offensive tactics were primarily confined to the first week of fighting, when the insurgents frequently ambushed the Germans from vantage points in the upper stories of buildings. Interconnecting passages between attics provided escape and communication routes. In the second week the main scene of battle apparently shifted to the bunkers, arms factories, and sewers, which were increasingly used by the insurgents for logistical purposes.

Throughout the struggle, high morale born of desperation was the main factor that sustained resistance. Although noncombatant inhabitants did surrender as the Germans advanced through the ghetto, the young fighters seldom gave up. Resistance was so unexpectedly stiff and enduring that German estimates of the duration of the uprising had to be revised more than once. But the JCO was fighting a losing battle. Its inadequate firepower and lack of defense against the German block-by-block burning of buildings proved decisive. After about four weeks of fighting, the Germans had completely crushed the Jews.⁴⁸

Deteriorating Relations Between the Home Army and the U.S.S.R.

It was also in 1943 that the Home Army began its military operations, though on a small scale. Some partisan units were formed around mid-year to absorb refugees who had sought security in the forests. These proceeded to attack German settlements newly implanted around Zamosc and to sabotage the logistical facilities servicing German troops in the Soviet Union.⁴⁹ These activities were limited, however, and did not constitute an insurgent move into military operations.

In the autumn of 1943 an increasingly difficult international situation led to a major modification of insurgent strategy. Since their victory at Stalingrad in 1942, the Soviets had assessed Home Army activities as essentially anti-Soviet in nature and had adopted a policy inimical to the interests of the Polish insurgents. They publicly attacked the "passive" policy of the Home Army, laid claim to eastern Poland, refused to enter talks leading to the coordination of Home Army and Red army operations, and—after the Katyn Forest massacres controversy* in the spring of 1943—broke off relations with the Polish government-in-exile and backed the formation of an exile Polish Communist government. By mid-1943, therefore, Polish leaders both in London and in Poland realized that they could not count on Red army support for a Polish uprising.⁵⁰

* See "Counterinsurgency" section for Nazi exploitation of this event, p. 268.

Planning for Military Operations

In this tense international atmosphere the TEMPEST plan was drawn up and adopted in late 1943. This plan called for a new, "quasi-military" phase entailing a buildup of partisan detachments behind the German eastern front, intensification of sabotage behind German lines, harassment of retreating German units, and occupation of evacuated or nearly abandoned localities in the line of advance of the Red army. Government-in-exile and insurgent leaders felt that stepped-up operations against the Germans were both feasible in view of the war situation and necessary in order to reassert Polish administration and counter Soviet charges that the Home Army was led by "pacifists." In the spring and summer of 1944 the plan was executed with some success. Home Army troops participated in the liberation of Wilno, Lwow, Lublin, and other towns. Reportedly, the greatest obstacle was not the retreating Germans but the Soviet NKVD, which often disarmed Home Army units and arrested and sometimes executed Home Army officers.⁸¹

The major deviation from the TEMPEST plan, and that which constituted the short "military" phase of the insurgency, was the Home Army-directed Warsaw insurrection of August-September 1944. The insurgents' decision to carry out a military operation was politically as well as militarily motivated. Politically, the insurrection would refute Soviet allegations of Home Army inactivity and secure the capital before the Soviets arrived; militarily, it would cut key German logistical lines leading through Warsaw and hasten a German defeat. According to General "Bor" Komorowski, Polish insurgents presupposed the continuation of the Red army offensive, which by July 1944 had brought advanced Soviet troops to within 10 miles of Warsaw. It was anticipated that the insurrection would have to be sustained for only a week or ten days, after which the Soviets would arrive.⁸²

Home Army Begins Warsaw Insurrection of 1944

The uprising began on August 1, 1944, with the insurgents donning identifying armbands and engaging in sharp and sustained offensive operations against German-held offices, public buildings, plants, bridges, etc. Home Army forces numbered about 40,000, including roughly 5,000 women who were mainly organized into messenger, propaganda, kitchen, medical, and mine-laying services. Subordinating themselves to the tactical direction of Home Army officers were 600 Polish Communist fighters and a battalion of other radical leftists. In addition, thousands of Warsaw citizens and nearby villagers lent their active support. Popular support for the uprising was unanimous and spontaneous.⁸³

Keyed up with enthusiasm and fighting against German forces of about equal numerical strength, the insurgents achieved their tactical objectives in the first week in spite of their inferior firepower. Within the first week about two-thirds of the city was in insurgent hands and the bridges across the Vistula leading to the German eastern front were cut off. The battle picture was that of isolated German strongpoints surrounded by insurgent-held blocks of

buildings, the latter in turn surrounded by German troops on the periphery. The insurgents were able to sustain offensive action and maintain control over most of the city until the final week of August, at which time their position began to weaken because of growing logistical problems.⁵⁴

Two Problems: Logistics and Lack of Red Military Support

Logistics occupied much insurgent time and ingenuity. Openings were blasted between attics, cellars, and courtyards; and many sewers were lined with duckboards, ropes, lights, and traffic controllers to provide a maze of passages that permitted the concealed passage of supplies and personnel. The main logistical problem, especially acute in September, was the depletion of ammunition and food stocks. A number of RAF drops and, after the second week in September, American and Soviet drops supplemented Home Army stocks of self-produced and captured German munitions, but reportedly these drops failed to supply the needed daily quota of five tons. A food and water shortage became especially critical in September, during which time numerous persons fainted from weakness or contracted dysentery and other diseases. This condition could be relieved only by a total liberation of the city, and here the actions of the Soviets proved decisive.⁵⁵

In the first week of the uprising the Soviets brought their western offensive to a halt. For weeks thereafter, Home Army leaders, exile government leaders, and even President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill sought to persuade the Soviets to resume their ground and air advance in coordination with Home Army operations and to make U.S. flights to Warsaw possible by extending landing privileges at Soviet-held air bases 50 to 150 miles from Warsaw.⁵⁶

These Western proposals met with little success. The Soviets maintained that a new concentration of Germans in Warsaw, brought about by the uprising, made an immediate takeover of that city impossible at the time and that a general German counterattack along the front was at the same time delaying the planned flanking of Warsaw. As for not extending landing rights to the Americans, the Soviets replied that they did not desire to associate themselves with an uprising which they regarded as an inopportune adventure.⁵⁷

Around mid-September, however, the Soviets did give landing privileges to the British and Americans and also commenced their own nightly air drops. In addition they dispatched two battalions of untrained Polish troops recently drafted into the Red army. But the crucial factor was that the Red army did not resume its major offensive. An advance was made to the suburbs of Warsaw, but it stopped short of crossing the Vistula River.

Thus facing serious logistical problems and desperately needing outside reinforcements, the insurgents entered the final phase of the uprising in the last two weeks of September 1944.⁵⁸

COUNTERINSURGENCY

Within the first year of the occupation of Poland, the Nazis must have fully recognized the measure of the occupation problem confronting them. Ethnic Poles were almost unanimous in their hostility and organized resistance was quickly emerging. The insurgents aimed at nothing less than the total liberation of Poland from foreign rule. Nazi policy, on the other hand, was to maintain total and continuing Nazi rule over the Poles and to relegate them to a servile economic role. Poland became especially important for the Nazis after they invaded the Soviet Union and, later, sought to sustain their hard-pressed armies on all fronts—from Poland the Nazis were extracting badly needed foodstuffs and manpower, and through Poland they were supplying their armies in the Soviet Union.

German Policy Accepts a Limited Degree of Insurgency in the General Government Area

In 1939-40 the Nazis embarked on a counterinsurgent program in both the annexed area and the General Government region, the objective of which was apparently to limit insurgent acts to certain "tolerable" limits. Subsequent Nazi action and statements imply that such limits were not exceeded so long as insurgent activities did not endanger the ethnic Germans settled among the Poles, especially in the annexed area, interrupt Nazi economic policy, or disrupt Wehrmacht operations on the eastern front. This is not to say that the Nazis envisaged no permanent solution to the insurgent problem. They apparently felt that the annexed area and the General Government area could be made completely secure only after Poles were displaced by Germans as the exclusive or majority "racial" stock. Indeed, such a displacement was partially executed in the annexed part during the war, and plans were laid for a similar displacement to be carried out in the General Government area after the war.⁵⁹

During the occupation, Dr. Frank took some half-hearted steps toward reform and pacification in the General Government area, but in essence the absence of a true pacification effort was the distinguishing feature of the Nazi counterinsurgent effort in both the incorporated and the General Government areas. The Nazis' lack of interest in reforms was clearly stated in a newspaper article written by a deputy of the Nazi party in the General Government. This high official publicly declared that the aim of the party was not to make the Poles "Nazi-minded" but to see that "leadership here is German ... here the sun shines primarily for Germans."⁶⁰

In the incorporated part, Nazi control measures were extraordinarily stringent, in order to make the area safe for German settlers. Eventually, 1 to 3 million German farmers, bureaucrats, and other civilians were living and working among 5 to 7 million Poles in the annexed part. The Nazis apparently were able to place one or more German families in every block or neighborhood and to establish a pervasive, German-staffed "block-warden" system. Surveillance in the

annexed area was so intensive and arrests so frequent that the Polish insurgents were forced to abandon plans for building more than a skeleton underground network and had to confine their operations to petty sabotage. Indeed, it was difficult for them to maintain even an organized underground nucleus. In one district, five consecutive Home Army commanders were arrested in a period of two years. ⁶¹

In the neighboring General Government area, Hans Frank did not seek to maintain such a high degree of control. Indeed, this would have been impossible, since there were no more than 250,000 German civilians to administer between 14 and 18 million Poles. ⁶² Consequently, it was here that the insurgents were able to mount a serious challenge to the occupiers and tax German counterinsurgent efforts.

Security Forces Available in the General Government Area

Overall responsibility for the counterinsurgent program in the General Government area rested, of course, with the Governor General, but Reichsfuehrer SS Heinrich Himmler was vested with concurrent general responsibility, a factor which gave rise to tension between Frank and Himmler and to their subordinates in the General Government. In their counterinsurgent program in the General Government, these Nazi leaders relied mainly on German personnel: the Elite Guard (SS), Security Service (SD), Secret State Police (Gestapo), the Armed Forces (Wehrmacht), German gendarmes, and a special police force consisting of German males between 18 and 40 years old. ⁶³

A major exception to the use of German forces was the employment of Ukrainian, Latvian, and perhaps Lithuanian troops for ghetto guard duty. There was also the "Blue Police," a uniformed force of ethnic Poles, but its loyalties were uncertain, and the Germans restricted it mainly to patrolling and routine criminal investigation. Despite restrictions on its activities, many of its personnel aided insurgents by providing needed documents and transporting insurgent supplies under "official" cover. There were also Jewish policemen equipped with rubber truncheons who patrolled the ghettos. In the Warsaw ghetto there were 2,000 such policemen, who did much of the actual evacuation work in the summer of 1942. Their service was rewarded when most were themselves evacuated for extermination at the end of the summer. ⁶⁴

Drastic Steps To Prevent the Growth of Resistance

The control program implemented in the General Government section in 1939-40 was three-fold, consisting of preventive measures, an extensive psychological campaign, and measures for detection and containment of resistance action. One of the first preventive steps was taken in 1939 when Frank's officials ordered the Poles to have their 100- to 500-zloty bills specially stamped. They were allowed to keep only a certain amount of this stamped money, while any additional funds had to be deposited. This measure limited the availability of funds for insurgent

use. Another preventive step consisted of informing German officials in the General Government section that German men working there should be joined as soon as possible by their wives. This pointer, conveyed in a Nazi circular, implied that lonely Germans might be susceptible to the charms of women in the Polish resistance. The circular noted the extreme nationalism and resistance skill of Polish women and characterized them as "the most dangerous women in Europe."⁶⁵

The most drastic preventive measure was what was termed "extraordinary pacification" (Ausserordentliche Befriedungsaktion). Governor General Frank, who apparently organized this step, described it:

The men capable of leadership whom we have found to exist in Poland must be liquidated. Those following them must ... be eliminated in their turn. There is no need to burden the Reich and the Reich police organization with this. There is no need to send these elements to Reich concentration camps....⁶⁶

The upshot was the arrest of some 3,500 to 4,000 persons and the immediate execution of about half. This surprise action took place in the first half of 1940, mainly in May and June and concurrent with the Nazi invasion of the Low Countries, when Frank expected world attention to be diverted. The victims included members of the intelligentsia, former politicians, landowners, clergymen, etc. — in short, any person deemed a likely leader of resistance. There is no doubt that many potential and actual underground leaders were liquidated at this time. Among those executed were the heads of the Peasant and Socialist parties.⁶⁷

Nazi Psychological Operations

In their psychological operations, which were constant during the occupation, the Nazis generally stressed three themes. One recurrent idea was German invincibility. The second was the German struggle against the Jews and, after June 1941, against the Communists. The third theme was German readiness to punish the Poles severely so long as any resistance continued.

When in the spring of 1943 the mass graves of over 10,000 murdered Polish army officers were found in the Katyn Forest near Smolensk, the Reich Minister of Propaganda, Dr. Goebbels, immediately saw the propaganda value of this discovery and noted that "We shall be able to live on it for a couple of weeks.... The Katyn incident is developing into a gigantic political affair which may have wide repercussions. We are exploiting it in every manner possible."⁶⁸ Every Nazi organ immediately charged the Soviets with responsibility for this massacre, and the International Red Cross was invited to investigate. In Poland this was the central propaganda theme for more than "a couple of weeks." Dr. Goebbels had several Polish intellectuals taken to the scene, and it is known that their reports were carefully studied by the Home Army. Nazi efforts undoubtedly paid off: the incident provided the pretext for the U. S. S. R. to sever relations with the Polish government-in-exile, and the Polish population and Home Army were undoubtedly alienated from the Soviets.

Not only did German propaganda, through its controlled mass media and posters, stress German readiness to punish any kind of resistance, but this theme was also brought forcibly and unmistakably to Polish attention through physical reprisals. In February 1940, Dr. Frank spoke of these reprisals to a German newsmen in terms indicating his early mastery of the situation: "If for every seven executed Poles I wanted to hang out public announcements, then the forests of Poland would not suffice to produce the paper for such announcements."⁶⁹ Later, Frank became less self-assured.

Mass Reprisals as Both a Punitive and Preventive Measure

At times hostages were held in case an act of sabotage or other resistance occurred. There is some indication that Governor General Frank preferred to use only captured resistance persons as hostages,⁷⁰ but he appears not to have pressed this point. Consequently both captured insurgents and innocent citizens served as hostages. Persons were also selected at random--sometimes all residents of a block or a whole village population were rounded up and then either executed, imprisoned, or deported for acts of resistance committed in the locale by persons unknown.⁷¹ Reprisals were thus administered on a collective-responsibility basis in an effort to terrorize the general populace.

German officials felt that if reprisals were rigorous enough the majority of Poles would eventually seek a cessation of resistance activity; at the least, they expected terrorization to keep resistance within tolerable limits. Reprisals were conducted in an effort to force insurgent leaders to slacken their overt activities or, in one unsuccessful case, to prompt a Home Army leader, General "Bor" Komorowski, to surrender.⁷² Yet another reason was the German belief that mass executions could be used to obtain denunciations of underground members. In the period of most intense underground and quasi-military activity, from October 1943 to March 1944, the Germans conducted daily roundups of pedestrians and posted public notices that the arrested persons, whose names were listed, would be released if their families denounced an underground member. The following day, executions would take place. In this five-month period alone, some 15,000 Poles were executed, an average of 150 persons a day.⁷³ Still another reason for mass executions, specifically mentioned by Frank, was that the Nazis could not permit Germans to die without inflicting even greater losses on the Poles, in order to preserve the dominance of the German "racial strain."⁷⁴

Some Nazi Token Measures at "Pacification"

Although the Nazi psychological effort was mainly to terrorize, there were a few isolated attempts to get specific groups of Poles to do their bidding willingly, or even to drop certain programs causing trouble. During the evacuations of the Jewish ghettos in 1942, Nazi representatives used deception to try and convince suspicious and recalcitrant Jews that they were being

evacuated to work camps where they would receive humane treatment and their children would have schools and playgrounds.⁷⁵ In late 1943, Frank did intervene and manage to halt a resettlement program that had aroused enough resistance to threaten the security of the entire Lublin district. This program apparently had been initiated over Dr. Frank's head by Himmler and had caused the resignation of the Nazi governor of Lublin.

Dr. Goebbels' observations on this point, recorded in his diary before Frank was able to get the program halted, are interesting and reveal that there were elements in the Reich favoring a greater emphasis on pacification. The Minister of Propaganda bitterly noted that of the 50,000 Poles marked for deportation from Lublin, 25,000 had escaped and joined the partisans. Now 180,000 more Poles were scheduled for evacuation, and Goebbels, protesting this action, wrote, "Dr. Frank . . . hasn't sufficient authority to put his foot down on the encroachments of the police and the SS. It makes you want to tear out your hair when you encounter such appalling political ineptitude."⁷⁶ Goebbels stated that, while philosophical and ideological aims were being subordinated in the Reich proper for the sake of the war effort, such was not being done in the occupied areas where ". . . our politicians act as though we were living in profound peace." He concluded by caustically asserting that this whole affair demonstrated once again the need for leadership in the Reich and the occupied areas, and the lack of "clarity and logic" in the Reich's policies.

Perhaps to pacify the Poles, but possibly to provide for his own defense in the event of a German defeat, Dr. Frank in late 1943 and early 1944 also undertook to allow a token expression of Polish culture. In Cracow he opened a Chopin museum and a theater where Polish actors could perform Polish plays.⁷⁷ But neither this cultural move nor the attempts to placate the Lublin peasants constituted major deviations from the general Nazi effort at control through terror. No concerted effort to pacify the Poles was undertaken.

Nazi Intelligence Penetrates and Limits Resistance Operations

In addition to these indirect or preventive measures, the Nazis employed a variety of measures for detecting and controlling insurgent activities. A number of police measures were invoked. Streets, railway stations, and other communication points were watched closely and spot checks of identity cards and other papers made frequently in such places. Different documents were required in the various districts, and they were often changed, thus making it difficult for the insurgents to keep their forged papers up-to-date. Special Gestapo agents disguised as beggars, etc., circulated among the Poles in efforts to get pictures or descriptions of underground workers. Gestapo "spotters" were posted in likely spots to look for identified persons. It was apparently this "spotter" technique that led to the capture of the second commander of the Home Army, General "Grot."⁷⁸

The Gestapo also watched the homes of persons living in hiding to catch them if they returned. This resulted in the capture of Alexander Debbski, a top leader in the Nationalist party.

Agents provocateurs were also infiltrated into underground cells. One such agent worked his way to the top of his organization, an independent group, and then managed to become a leader of a coalition of about 20 independent organizations. As a result, many leaders in this network were thereafter captured, and the national movement was also placed in jeopardy because of the close liaison between its leaders and these independent leaders.⁷⁹

Special units were assigned to detect and pinpoint insurgent radio stations in communication with London. These units, scattered all over Poland, could detect a transmission and begin searches to pinpoint its point of origin within 15 to 60 minutes of its commencement. At first, uniformed personnel driving cars equipped with bulky direction-finding equipment would conduct these searches, but these were easily spotted. The Germans then began to use personnel in civilian dress, supplied with devices that could be concealed under their apparel and making their final approaches on foot. When airplanes were used to pinpoint insurgent stations, they would climb high over an area under surveillance, cut their engines and glide over the area in silence. In this way they often escaped detection by insurgent lookouts. When a station was pinpointed, troops would cordon off the area and conduct a house-by-house search. The method was so efficient that few insurgent radio operators operated for more than a few months before capture.⁸⁰

It should be mentioned that the Nazis were apparently most successful in infiltrating undergrounds and conducting mass arrests in the six months following June 1940, i. e., immediately after the fall of France. Earlier, insurgent leaders had built mass-membership organizations hastily, sacrificing discipline and security procedures, because they anticipated a quick Anglo-French victory and a concomitant need for a general insurrection throughout Poland. Such organizations were relatively easy prey for extended and concerted police countermeasures, and the Nazis succeeded in arresting whole units in late 1940 before insurgent leaders managed to restrict temporarily the influx of new members and to implement better security procedures.⁸¹

For the most part, the Nazi control program kept insurgent operations in the General Government region within tolerable limits during the years 1939-44. There were, however, signs that the Nazis in this region were seriously worried from mid-1943 on about the efficacy of their control program. Some high Nazi officials admitted that a state of emergency existed in the area because of stepped-up insurgent operations. In the same period, mass executions were greatly increased, approaching or surpassing the level of intensity seen earlier.⁸² In two instances the control program clearly broke down: both the Warsaw-ghetto uprising of early 1943 and the general Warsaw insurrection of late 1944 required the application of tactical military measures before they could be crushed.

General Stroop Begins Armed Attack on the Ghetto

On April 19, 1943, the Germans commenced military operations against the ghetto.⁸³ The campaign that followed lasted for about a month, weeks longer than the Germans originally

expected. The German commander was SS Brigadefuehrer and Polizei Generalmajor, Juergen Stroop, SS and police chief for the District of Warsaw. Stroop had at his disposal during the ghetto campaign an average daily force of about 36 officers and 2,054 men; about 30 of the officers and 1,190 of the men were Germans, with military experience of no more than three to four weeks training. The units under Stroop comprised a Waffen SS Panzer reserve and training battalion, a Waffen SS Cavalry reserve and training battalion, an SS police regiment, a Wehrmacht antiaircraft battery, and some engineering units. Stroop also had a Polish police group of 4 officers and 363 men; a Polish fire brigade with 166 men; and a battalion of foreign troops, probably Lithuanians, with 2 officers and 335 men. Apparently Stroop did not anticipate any need to adopt special, urban counter guerrilla tactics; he appears to have assumed that superior firepower would suffice to crush the insurgents quickly, even though his forces were small and had little or no military experience.

During the first five days of battle, the Germans relied mainly on conventional tactics. Beginning early each morning, troops would move through the ghetto in a single-direction sweeping operation, assisted by armor (one tank and two armored cars) and with artillery and air support. At night the German forces would withdraw from the ghetto and reinforce the guard at the wall. The Germans found that the Jews had manned the sewers, but in these first days German troops were unable to get at them. During most of the first week, German success was apparently limited to the capture and dismantling of some Jewish-occupied armaments shops and the evacuation of many noncombatants. The troops were unable to take many prisoners or permanently secure parts of the ghetto. When they succeeded in taking positions in buildings, the insurgents escaped into the labyrinth of passages, bunkers, and sewers. After the Germans withdrew at night, the Jews would emerge to retake the positions they had abandoned during the day.

New Tactics Demonstrate Difficulties of Overcoming Determined Urban Resistance

To overcome this problem the troops adopted new measures near the end of the first week. In one successful operation, the attack was delayed until midmorning and was then launched from all sides of the ghetto. This surprise encircling operation, which caught many defenders unprepared and prevented them from concentrating their defenses, resulted in the capture of many insurgents.

The most drastic and successful measure adopted at this time was the block-by-block burning of the ghetto. By systematically burning the buildings, leaving only shells, the Germans greatly reduced the number of defensible positions, destroyed numerous hard-to-find bunkers located beneath the buildings, and captured many Jews fleeing the fires. This was accomplished with relatively little expenditure in men, materiel, or time. By the end of the campaign, most buildings in the ghetto had been destroyed by fire or bombardment. Only the German-held prison was left standing. Thousands of insurgents and noncombatants were forced from buildings and bunkers and captured, and probably another 5,000 to 6,000 were killed in fires.

But even this systematic, block-by-block burning of the ghetto failed to eliminate all resistance. Many insurgents escaped and operated from bunkers that survived the fires or set up new positions in the ruins of burned-out buildings. Daily troop sweeps of the ghetto were thus necessary to ferret out and destroy the remaining defenders. To achieve maximum effect from these sweeps, the German commander divided his forces into units with specific zones of responsibility, so that his men would become quite familiar with the special features of the buildings in their zone.

Even so, it was often impossible to locate bunker entrances, especially after the defenders, somewhere around May 1, began to remain silent in their attempt to escape detection. Dogs were then used to locate entrances, and prisoners were reportedly tortured for information about the locations of the bunkers. When bunkers were found, they were destroyed by fire, dynamiting, or flooding. In the last case, pneumatic drills were used to bore holes into the bunker openings and water was forced through the holes.⁸⁴

The Germans had to overcome Jewish combatants not only in the ruins of buildings and in bunkers but also in the sewers. German troops blew up stretches of sewer pipe, placed barbed-wire netting across the tunnels at strategic points, and bricked up many sewer outlets. In yet another move, they simultaneously opened 183 sewer openings around the ghetto and placed smoke candles in the openings, forcing many insurgents to the center of the ghetto, where they were captured.⁸⁵ They tried to dam up the sewers to flood the rest of the Jews out, but this step was frustrated when the Jews blew the valves so that the flow of water resumed. Finally, German troops were forced to enter the sewers and engage the Jews who were there.

Measures To Cut Off Jews From Any Outside Aid

To prevent reinforcement of the Jews in the ghetto, the Germans maintained around the outside wall a cordon of guards comprised mainly of foreign and ethnic-Polish personnel. They placed blown openings in the wall under machinegun crossfire and initiated patrols of the "Aryan" neighborhoods immediately surrounding the ghetto. Night patrols wrapped their feet in rags to muffle their footsteps.

Other measures were designed to obtain the support, or at least noninterference, of the ethnic Poles in Warsaw. Governor General Frank issued a proclamation asking Warsaw's citizens to help the Germans in their struggle against "Communists and Jews." The Germans also posted notices that persons caught attempting to enter the ghetto without authorization would be shot. To enlist the support of Polish policemen in apprehending Jews who escaped from the ghetto, the Germans told the policemen that they could keep one-third of the cash found on captured Jews. The last measure reportedly met with some success.

The Death of the Ghetto: German-Jewish Losses Compared

By May 16, 1943, after about a month of fighting, the cumulative effects of the counter-measures had crushed all Jewish resistance. The decisive factors were superior German firepower and the piece-by-piece leveling of the entire ghetto. Victory was not achieved until all of the insurgents were either captured, killed outright, or buried under the rubble. Captured Jews, combatants and noncombatants alike, were often executed immediately after being pulled from the bunkers.

According to General Stroop, Jewish losses during the campaign were 56,065, of whom 7,000 were killed in combat; he estimated that an additional 5,000 to 6,000 lay buried in the ruins. It is not known how many of these were combatants and how many were noncombatants. Statements about counterinsurgent losses vary. German records list 15 Germans killed and scores wounded, one Polish policeman killed and five wounded, and foreign-troop losses of about a dozen wounded. Statements by Home Army insurgents indicate that German losses may have reached 300 killed and 1,000 wounded.⁸⁶

The Decline of Dr. Frank Epitomizes Nazi Intra-Party Rivalry and Friction

In a way, Dr. Frank was a near casualty of the conflagration. His prestige in Nazi circles was already waning, and the temporary breakdown of order in Warsaw almost finished him. One cannot be sure about the reasons for Frank's decline, but there is evidence that his problems were both administrative and personal and began possibly as early as the first few months of 1942. He may or may not have been an efficient administrator—there are conflicting reports. In any case a corruption scandal developed at that time in the General Government to cast a pall over the Governor General's competence. This occurrence led the anti-Nazi Ulrich von Hassell to note privately that "Frank . . . is a weak character."⁸⁷ At about the same time, Frank seems to have developed some last minute reservations about the genocide program that was then entering the mass execution stage, though the nature of his doubts is obscure and did not prompt him to raise serious objection. The same von Hassell recorded in May 1942:

Frank disapproves of these things, but is powerless because his own record is not clean. He is therefore completely in the hands of the S.S. The S.S. leader who has been put at his side, or, more accurately, has been placed above him, treats him as if he were non-existent.⁸⁸

One must interpret the above diary entry most carefully, however, for the Governor General's own party speeches of that period reveal almost a giddy enthusiasm for the extermination. But the reference to the SS is undoubtedly accurate.

Dr. Goebbels, who because of his closeness to Hitler wielded more power than his title might indicate, wrote of Frank even before the ghetto uprising that he had allowed his authority to be undercut and that "The Fuehrer no longer has any respect for him."⁸⁹ In a May 1943 diary entry, Goebbels recorded that "Events in the General Government have now progressed to the

point where Governor General Frank can no longer be kept in his position. Recent events in Warsaw finally broke Dr. Frank's neck." And a few days later, Goebbels noted that the Fuehrer had decided to replace Frank.⁸⁰

The Governor General was apparently losing an intra-party struggle of sorts with Heinrich Himmler, involving among other things a long-standing disagreement over police reprisals. Often Frank seemed to favor a more lenient or discriminating application of force than that applied by Himmler's subalterns. And increasingly the SS in the General Government, though technically under Frank's day-to-day direction, made their own policy.⁸¹ It is difficult to tell whether Frank's disagreement centered on the merits of the issue or on an underlying jurisdictional rivalry—probably both. Whatever the cause, Frank's resentment of the SS became very real.

It should be added that the Governor General also had his share of complicating personal problems. There was the not inconsiderable matter of his marital trouble, which prompted the Fuehrer to intervene and forbid a divorce. Goebbels felt that Dr. Frank's behavior in the episode was "not exactly noble" and served "... to play havoc with the Fuehrer's relationship to Frank."⁸² Added to this was Frank's rather ludicrous feud with Himmler over the merits of the legal profession. Himmler frequently discoursed on legal subjects—it was something of a hobby with him—and particularly on the "parasitic" function of the "legal gentry"; Frank's resentment of this, strangely professional, did not fail to impress the Reichsfuehrer SS unfavorably.⁸³

In spite of all of this, the Governor General survived and continued in his office. Dr. Goebbels complained in mid-1943 that "Frank is to be given one more chance to prove his worth."⁸⁴ The Governor General and the SS maintained basic security in their divergent ways for more than a year. In late 1943, when insurgent operations reached new plateaus of violence, Frank, in a pacification attempt, managed to get the Lublin resettlement program halted and made a couple of moves to allow greater Polish cultural expression, while at the same time the SS supervised greatly increased, indiscriminate roundups of hostages and mass executions.

General Bach-Zelewski Directs German Effort To Defeat the Warsaw Uprising

In August-September 1944, the general Warsaw uprising occurred and the Germans commenced their second military campaign against insurgents in Poland.⁸⁵ Although the Germans employed some tactics used in the earlier ghetto operations, this second campaign differed significantly from the earlier one. The most apparent difference was of course the scope of the new campaign. All of Warsaw was the battle zone and a larger commitment of troops was necessary. By the climax of the battle the Germans had introduced about 40,000 troops, including forces of the SS; military police; Luftwaffe ground staff; Hermann Goering, Viking, and Totenkopf (Death's Head) Panzer divisions; and the 73d Infantry Division. The Kaminsky Brigade of former Soviet soldiers was also used. Commanding all the troops was the SS Gen. Erich von dem Bach-Zelewski, an officer with previous counterinsurgency experience.

During the first three days of the battle the German response was mainly defensive, at least on the western side of the Vistula where the battle centered. In this period over 1,000 German troops were captured by the Home Army, 50 tanks were lost, control of two-thirds of the city and the key bridges was lost, and German-held strongpoints in the city were isolated and placed under siege. By and large the limited offensive action of the Germans seems to have consisted of reprisals against civilians and sporadic probes. Reportedly, houses were set afire, hundreds of persons were herded into basements and grenaded, and many captured youths and men were shot. Civilians lashed to ladders were used as shields in some actions, an unsuccessful measure as Home Army troops fired anyway. The Soviet Kaminsky Brigade is said by a Polish source to have been responsible for many of these atrocities.

Germans Go on Offensive, Using Special Tactics

A concerted counterattack was finally launched on August 4, from which time the Germans were engaged in offensive operations to retake the city. Their immediate objective was to open up the main arteries and bridges leading across the Vistula to the eastern front. Using tanks, artillery, and incendiaries to set fire to the buildings along these routes, the Germans managed by around August 9 to force back Home Army units from the major east-west roads and bridges. To prevent major sniping activity by Home Army personnel who returned and set up positions in the ruins along these roads, the Germans bricked up the windows of the ruins adjoining the roads.

With this initial objective achieved, the Germans began a campaign to retake all of the city, a far more difficult task and one that would require special measures. The German attack was planned to maximize the two German assets--good vehicular mobility across and around the city and superior firepower. Tank, artillery, and air support were therefore concentrated on one sector of the city at a time, thus achieving the firepower and armor needed to destroy the fortified positions of the insurgents. After success in one sector, attention was shifted to another sector; in this way a piecemeal destruction of insurgent positions was accomplished. The Germans took peripheral sectors first and then worked toward the center of Warsaw, but they shifted momentarily to concentrate on securing those sectors along the western bank of the Vistula after the Red army advanced to the eastern bank in the third week of September.

The sequence of steps in the daily attack procedure became fairly routine. In the mornings the Germans would begin with a Stuka attack at 300 feet and intensive artillery saturation. Then in the afternoon, insurgent positions would be attacked with remote-controlled mobile mines, followed by Tiger tanks and the infantry. Fighting, always vicious on both sides, was often house-to-house or even floor-to-floor. The Germans seldom used their artillery at night, so that the insurgents often took advantage of this lull to counterattack and attempt to reoccupy positions lost during the day. The climax of the fighting came in the last week of August, when major sections of the city fell to the Germans. Thereafter, the insurgents were on the defensive and faced growing logistical problems.

The Germans also employed extensive measures to cut off insurgent food and supplies. One step apparently involved the evacuation of peasants from villages surrounding Warsaw. To disrupt Allied airdrop activities, the Germans set up intensive antiaircraft barrages and launched grenades into drop zones lit up at night. These barrages forced British planes to bypass Warsaw and drop supplies in a forest north of the city, thus greatly complicating insurgent logistical problems. When the insurgents in Warsaw, assisted by Home Army partisans located in the forest, managed to get many of the supplies dropped there, the Germans moved to destroy this forest base. Forest fires were set, but the guerrillas succeeded in putting them out. Only toward the end of the uprising did the Germans succeed in encircling the forest and capturing or killing most of the insurgents located there.

The Germans also undertook to interrupt the insurgents' use of the sewers, employing many of the measures used in the ghetto campaign. But there were some innovations. Depinned grenades were suspended into the dark sewers to explode on contact with persons traveling in the tunnels. Petrol was poured into the sewers and set afire. The Germans also opened manholes and posted sentries at the openings to drop grenades into the openings at the first sign of movement.

Germans Use Propaganda, Offer Combatant Rights, and Effect Surrender

Interestingly enough, there were some attempts at propagandistic persuasion. In an effort to convince the insurgents of the hopelessness of their action during talks with Polish leaders, the Germans referred to Soviet hostility toward the Poles and the inaction of the Red army. In one attempt to confuse, the Germans resorted to black propaganda, distributing leaflets ostensibly signed by General "Bor" that ordered Home Army fighters to cease operations because of lack of Soviet support. Another black leaflet sought to create in isolated Home Army units the impression that their commander was considering joint German-Polish action against the Soviets.

After these attempts, all of which failed, the Nazis' propaganda effort was aimed mainly at inducing surrender. The Germans promised combatant rights to the insurgents and humane treatment for civilians, all of whom would be evacuated from the city. Until the last week in September, the Poles were disinclined to accept these overtures, but in the closing days of September, when hunger and thirst had become acute and no prospect of a Soviet offensive was in sight, the Home Army commander agreed to the German terms. The surrender agreement was signed on October 2, 1944, and the city's inhabitants and Home Army personnel, including General "Bor," were soon thereafter taken into captivity and evacuated. General "Bor" later claimed that the campaign cost the Home Army about 15,000 in killed, captured, or wounded. He somewhat optimistically put German losses at 10,000 killed, 7,000 missing, and 9,000 wounded. **

A Note on Casualties Inflicted and Suffered by the Germans in Poland

With these military campaigns against the Warsaw Jews in 1943 and against the Home Army in Warsaw in 1944, the Nazis crushed the two major insurgent operations in the General Government area. Considered together, these two battles may have exacted a heavy toll in German lives; they were certainly costly in insurgent lives. It is estimated that, whereas the Germans may possibly have lost between 5,000 and 10,000 men, the Jewish and Polish insurgents suffered about 25,000 killed in action.

Numerous losses on both sides also occurred in the General Government section as a result of the overall Nazi occupation policy and Polish underground activities. Before 1943 the Nazis executed perhaps 17,000 ethnic Poles; from 1943 on, they probably executed close to 15,000. In addition, almost 3,500,000 Polish Jews were liquidated in the infamous "special action." On the other hand, German losses, excluding those killed in the two battles of Warsaw, did not exceed 6,000.⁹⁷

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

Judged in terms of the limited Nazi occupation objective, it is probably correct to say that the Nazis were generally successful in their counterinsurgency campaign. At no time did insurgent operations decisively interfere with Nazi occupation policy or war plans. The Poles were fully exploited economically, virtually all of the Jews were exterminated, and the lives of Germans in the annexed part were protected. Furthermore, there is no evidence that Polish insurgent operations ever decisively affected the Wehrmacht.

Nazi counterinsurgency in Poland demonstrated the efficacy of a stringent control program in achieving limited, short-range objectives. The application of unmitigated coercion and punishment, coupled with extensive police control measures, enabled the occupier, at least for five years, to utilize a relatively isolated country's economic productivity, to maintain life-or-death control over an entire population, and to use the region as a base for external military operations. Almost complete hostility to the Germans among the Polish population was not sufficient to overcome the ruthless application of force by the occupier.

On the other hand the stringent and often brutal control measures that made this a strong and largely successful counterinsurgency program also made it a potential failure. Since the measures only controlled and did not pacify the population, the Nazis were always confronted by a hostile people, potentially willing to cooperate even with the Soviets. This became a threat to the Nazis when the Red army entered Poland. As it turned out, however, the Poles remained largely isolated. International politics precluded their making a militarily significant contribution to the liberation of their country.

As for Hans Frank, he lived through the collapse of his satrapy in Poland and was brought to trial at Nuremberg by his Allied captors and convicted of crimes against humanity. His end

was oddly befitting a life marked by a paradoxical mixture of hard core Nazism and cultural refinement. Frank neither committed suicide at the last moment nor asserted his belief in the correctness of his past loyalties and actions. Instead, he became penitent and begged God's forgiveness before he was hanged on October 16, 1946.

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¹⁶ Great Britain, Nazi Occupied Europe, p. 44; The Times (London), Oct. 23, 1939, cited in Toynbee and Toynbee (eds.), Hitler's Europe, p. 551; and Lemkin, Axis Rule in Occupied Europe, p. 222.

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¹⁹IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XXXVI, 482.

²⁰Hans Frank, "Tagebuch des Herrn Generalgouverneurs fuer die Besetzten polnischen Gebiete," (hereinafter referred to as Frank's Diary), Doc. 2233-PS, in IMT, Trial of the Major War Criminals, XXIX, 474, 572-81; Occupied Europe: German Exploitation and Its Post-War Consequences (prepared in the Information Department of the Royal Institute of International Affairs; London: Oxford University Press, 1944), p. 49; and Lemkin, Axis Rule in Occupied Europe, p. 87.

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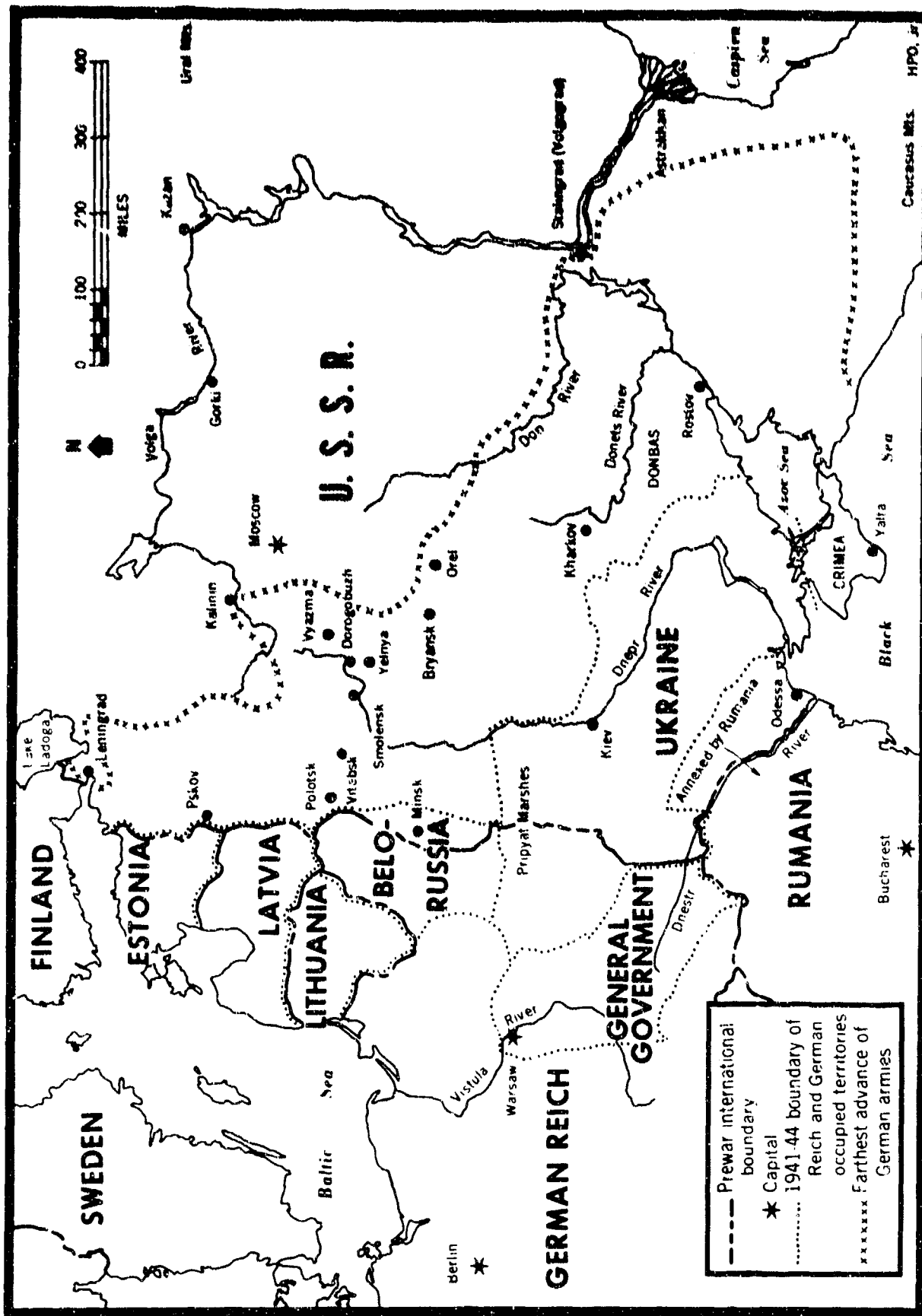
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Chapter Ten

**UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS
1941-1944**

by Charles V. P. von Luttichau



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German occupation policies during World War II stimulated the growth of a Soviet partisan movement which acted in support of the Soviet armies' main defensive efforts; German military power then had to be diverted from major offensive operations to contain the guerrilla threat to their rear area security.

BACKGROUND

Operation BARBAROSSA, which launched the German invasion of the Soviet Union in the summer of 1941, was met, not only by a stubborn defense by Soviet conventional arms, but also by insurgency and guerrilla warfare in the occupied rear areas. As an element of what Premier Joseph Stalin was to call the Great Patriotic War, guerrilla activities continued for three years on an ever-increasing scale. They did not end until the Red army had pushed German forces across the western frontier into Poland in the summer of 1944.

The intense and protracted struggle between the German occupation forces and the Soviet partisans has a special place in the operations of World War II because of the vast area over which it took place, the great numbers of men involved on both sides, the objectives of the two opponents, and the techniques that were employed. Many situations and problems encountered today in guerrilla and counter guerrilla operations occurred in occupied Russia, where terrain, climate, and population offered innumerable variations on the theme. It would be strange indeed if there were not lessons for future application from this "greatest irregular resistance movement in the history of warfare."¹

The Soviet Union is the largest continental state in the world—three times the size of the United States. The scene of the guerrilla warfare in World War II was European Russia, which equals in size the remainder of Europe.² The Germans had planned to occupy about half of European Russia, but since they did not fully succeed, the insurgency was limited to its western third.

European Russia and the Main Areas of Guerrilla Operations

European Russia is a land of low relief.³ Its main geographic feature is the East European Plain, which extends from northern Germany to the Ural Mountains. The heartland of this vast expanse is the Moscow region. The shortest route to Moscow from the west is the so-called northern land bridge, which runs along the blunt spine of the Smolensk-Moscow ridge. Napoleon took this route in 1812; so also did the Germans with their main thrust in 1941. To the north of the land bridge lies a wide belt of primeval forests and swamps extending toward Leningrad. In the center of this forbidding area lies Polotsk. To the south of the land bridge spreads one of the most formidable terrain obstacles of Europe, the Pripjat Marshes. Toward the east the marshes give way to an equally large, densely wooded area, whose hub is Bryansk. The Ukrainian black earth region and the steppe cover the southern portion of European Russia. Here a second invasion route leads from south Poland to the industrial regions of the Dnepr Bend and the Donbas, and eventually to the Caucasus and Urals. Great rivers—among them the Dnestr, Dnepr, Donets, Don, and Volga—impede an invader's advance in this zone.

During World War II, the vast swamp and forest areas on both sides of the main route to Moscow became the strongholds of the partisan movement. The main centers were at Polotsk and Bryansk. In contrast, the Ukraine, whose wide open spaces offered few safe areas for partisans, remained relatively free of guerrilla activity.

Of the three main industrial regions in western Russia—Leningrad, Moscow, and a portion of the Ukraine—the Germans captured only the Donbas (Donets Basin) in the Ukraine. The areas occupied were largely agricultural, and Soviet evacuation and scorched-earth policies tended to reduce the industrial capabilities of the captured regions.

All of European Russia except for the Black Sea coast suffers the hardships of a harsh continental climate. Summers are short and hot and the relentless grip of dark winter seems endless. To make things worse, spring thaws and autumn rains turn the land and its roads into a sea of mud. During these two mud seasons, each lasting for weeks, vehicular traffic comes to a virtual standstill.⁴

By western standards, the Russian system of communications in 1941 was wholly inadequate for the requirements of modern warfare. Only three main communications arteries extended from Poland eastward, and even these rail lines and roads were poor and often structurally unsound. The absence of lateral links in the system was one of its greatest weaknesses. In addition, communications were highly vulnerable to attack because the many bridges and culverts offered inviting targets for sabotage or demolition.

The People of the U.S.S.R. and Their Insurgent Past

In 1941 the Soviet Union had an estimated 200 million inhabitants of whom almost three-fourths were concentrated in European Russia. Approximately 50 million Russians fell under

temporary German rule. Although 182 ethnic groups were then registered in Russia and 149 different languages were spoken, five groups accounted for 90 percent of the population: the Great Russians (52 percent), the Ukrainians (19 percent), the Muslim Turkic nations (11 percent), and the Caucasian tribes and the Belorussians (4 percent each). About one-third of the people lived in cities.⁴

The October revolution of 1917 and the ensuing consolidation of Bolshevik control had ended a long Russian tradition of conspiracy and insurgency against established authority. After the Bolsheviks had become rulers, they had ruthlessly suppressed insurgent efforts by dissident groups.* Even the methods and experiences of partisan warfare had been relegated to the safe repositories of history books. Despite all later propaganda claims, the Soviet partisan movement of 1941-44 was the result, not of a spontaneous uprising of the masses, but of deliberate plans and determined action on the part of the Communist party and its national, regional, and local leaders.

German Actions Unwittingly Encourage Growth of the Guerrilla Movement

Assuming that the as yet undefeated German force could vanquish the Soviet Union in a bold blitz campaign, the dictator of Germany, Adolf Hitler, and his advisers neglected to plan adequately for other contingencies. Guerrilla warfare was hardly considered. During the offensives of 1941, which carried the German armies to the gates of Moscow, the Germans bypassed large numbers of Soviet soldiers and scores of military depots. In their headlong rush to the east, the Germans neglected to mop up the rear areas and thus handed to the Soviet leaders the opportunity to organize the Red army stragglers into the nuclei of a partisan movement. The swift advance of the Germans also cut off many party officials, stranding them behind the front. With no chance of survival if the Germans should capture them, these bypassed Russians set to work building a Communist underground and partisan movement, for which they furnished the leadership. German tactical reverses in the winter of 1941-1942 gave the partisans the opportunity to consolidate.

The growth of an anti-German guerrilla movement was greatly aided—almost ensured—by the repressive nature of Nazi occupation policies, which were designed to enslave the Russian people, exploit the economic assets of the country, and deny large groups of the population the political freedom they were seeking. The Nazis were totally indifferent as to whether the occupied peoples, in the course of being exploited, starved to death.⁵ Thus the partisan movement, which at first had found little or no support among the people, gradually became the focal point of opposition to the Germans and often the only refuge for the persecuted.

*See, for example, Chapter Four, "U.S.S.R. (1917-1921)."

INSURGENCY

In an address to the Russian people on July 3, 1941, 11 days after the German assault, Stalin signaled the formation of the Soviet partisan movement:

Partisan units, mounted and on foot, must be formed; divisions and groups must be organized to combat enemy troops, to foment partisan warfare everywhere, to blow up bridges and roads, damage telephone lines, set fire to forests, stores, transports. In the occupied regions conditions must be made unbearable for the enemy and all his accomplices. They must be hounded and annihilated at every step and all their measures frustrated.⁷

This was the broad directive that governed all plans and activities of the partisan movement throughout its existence.

An Overview of the Insurgency—Its Phases and Its Strength

The movement developed in three phases. The first, from June to December 1941, was the formative period. At this time the movement was small, numbering only some 30,000 men. The German invasion and its speed of advance caught the U.S.S.R. off guard and plunged Soviet plans and preparations into a disarray that could not be overcome by improvisation. The first hard-core partisans, mostly Red army and Communist party men, lacked popular support, guerrilla training, and adequate communications. Their operations were generally unsuccessful.⁸

During the second phase, January to August 1942, after the German defeats in the winter battles, the partisan movement was reorganized by the Soviet High Command. Tighter control, better training, and a vast increase in logistical support accompanied an expansion in strength to about 150,000. The former battalion-size units became regiments, brigades, and larger groups, which aggressively sought control over large areas behind the German lines. Partisan missions shifted from simple harassment of rear areas to planned operations in tactical support of the Red army, with emphasis on cutting lines of communications and gathering intelligence. In these missions the partisan units were fairly effective, although their successes provoked large-scale countermeasures and often led them into pitched battle with German forces in which they suffered heavy losses.⁹

In the later summer of 1942, the partisan movement gradually passed into its third and mature phase. By the time of the German surrender at Stalingrad in early 1943, it had become clear that the German armies would eventually have to retreat and that the Soviets would return and reinstitute control over German-held areas. Partisan strength and local support accordingly increased. The guerrillas reached their peak number of about a quarter of a million in the summer of 1943. But the rapid growth of the movement diluted the fighting qualities of units. While the original partisan formations had consisted largely of former Red army

personnel, up to two-thirds were now local conscripts. Despite stepped-up training, efficiency remained low. This, however, was partially balanced by the change in the attitude of the population from indifference to moderate support. The organization and control of the partisan units, as well as logistics, were also improved by the Soviet High Command.

With the westward advance of the Red army, partisan missions changed from acts of terror against collaborators and sabotage against economic and industrial installations to a "war of the rails," the concerted, large-scale attack against German supply lines. These activities—coordinated in the late summer of 1943 and again in January–February 1944 with massive Red army operations—culminated in June 1944, in guerrilla attacks designed to paralyze the German army just before the launching of the final Soviet offensive. This much-propagandized effort, the effectiveness of which may have been somewhat overemphasized, was the final effort of the movement. Shortly thereafter, Soviet armies crossed into Poland, thus obviating the need for guerrilla warfare.

Soviet Planning for Guerrilla Warfare

While the operations of the partisan movement passed through three phases, only one basic change in its organization occurred. At the beginning of the conflict, when Stalin had called for the formation of partisan units, the instrument for executing these orders did not exist. One reason for this was the fact that the Soviet strategists apparently had envisioned an offensive toward the west, which would have made a partisan movement unnecessary. Another reason may have been the fear that open preparations for guerrilla warfare would have shaken the confidence of the people in the government. A general scheme for partisan warfare had been planned, however, though only the highest political and military leaders knew about it. Based on a regional concept, it was to be implemented by the party, the NKVD, and the Red army.¹⁰

In the initial confusion following the German invasion of 1941, which came as a complete surprise to Stalin and his close advisers, the Soviet leaders were only partially successful in implementing their secret plans. These were based on the assumption that a slow and deliberate Red army withdrawal would allow party and state officials time to organize multilayered and complex partisan and diversionist networks. The party Central Committee at the All-Union and Union Republic levels was to organize the insurgency along administrative channels leading from the oblasts or provinces, to the rural and city districts, and to state complexes such as the railroads, industrial plants, and government farms. At the oblast and district echelons, a dual command structure consisting of an overt and an underground organization was to be established. In the event of German occupation, the overt organizations were to be evacuated, together with certain key elements of the population and all essential industrial machinery; the underground cadres were to stay behind and activate a partisan movement.

The NKVD had the special task of forming a secret network of diversionist groups of agents, not exceeding seven operatives each, for active sabotage. In addition, NKVD districts were ordered to organize home defense units known as destruction battalions. The missions of these units were primarily defensive: to prevent enemy sabotage and to guard installations. The NKVD was also charged with the security function of screening prospective leaders and members of the partisan movement. As the German armies advanced deeper into Russia, the destruction battalions were assigned to the partisan movement and were incorporated as combat battalions (*otryady*) into the party regional underground organization.

Training and especially supply of the regional partisan movement became the responsibility of the Red army, specifically the Tenth Department of the Main Administration of Political Propaganda, which was under the immediate control of the Central Committee of the Communist party. Through these channels, army fronts (army groups) and armies were ordered to organize, direct, and supply partisan groups behind the German lines. Directives enjoined commissars and party members never to surrender; if cut off, they were to continue the battle in the German rear with sabotage and terrorism.¹¹

Genesis of the Guerrilla Movement and Its Political Implications

The Red army units bypassed by the German army initially constituted a larger reservoir of manpower for guerrilla warfare than did the regional partisan units. Army leaders and political commissars proved to be an effective and fanatical core around which the tens of thousands of stragglers and escapees from prisoner-of-war camps could be organized. Partisan units were first formed in the areas in which large encirclement battles had been fought. In the Ukraine, where terrain did not favor guerrilla activities and popular support was not at first forthcoming, the Soviet command resorted to the expedient of dropping small groups of paratroop commandos behind German lines with orders to destroy specific targets and gather intelligence. These efforts, which bore the marks of hasty improvisation, achieved little or nothing.

In the eyes of the Soviet command, however, the value of the partisan movement was not diminished by its small accomplishments. Faced with a choice between abandoning the movement or trying to make it an effective instrument of political strategy and tactical operations, the Russians in the winter of 1941-42 decided on the latter. A strong argument in favor of revitalizing and reorganizing the partisan movement was undoubtedly the fact that only through an underground could the Communist party hope to maintain a political hold on the occupied areas. This factor may well have outweighed any possible military considerations.

Development of a Centralized Partisan Organization

If the partisan movement was to live and succeed, an effective chain of command was urgently needed. The Soviet leaders shifted emphasis: instead of dealing separately with

numerous small and often isolated individual partisan units, they began to consider the movement as a whole. A centralized organization was gradually developed and was complete by the spring of 1942. The new organization was sufficiently flexible to allow for regional differences and shifting tactical needs, but the line of authority was always clear-cut. What was more, the new organization proved itself effective in action throughout the remainder of the struggle.

Absolute control of the partisan movement was vested in the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party and its executive organ, the National Defense Committee.¹² New in the chain of command was the Central Staff of the Partisan Movement, established on the same level as the Red Army Supreme Command. The Red Army's influence over the partisan movement, which had been greatest during the first phase, found recognition in the appointment of Marshal Kliment Voroshilov as its commander in chief. The real power, however, lay with the party and its representative, Panteleimon Ponomarenko, first secretary of the Belorussian Communist Party. He was the chief of staff and appears to have been the actual commander of the movement.¹³

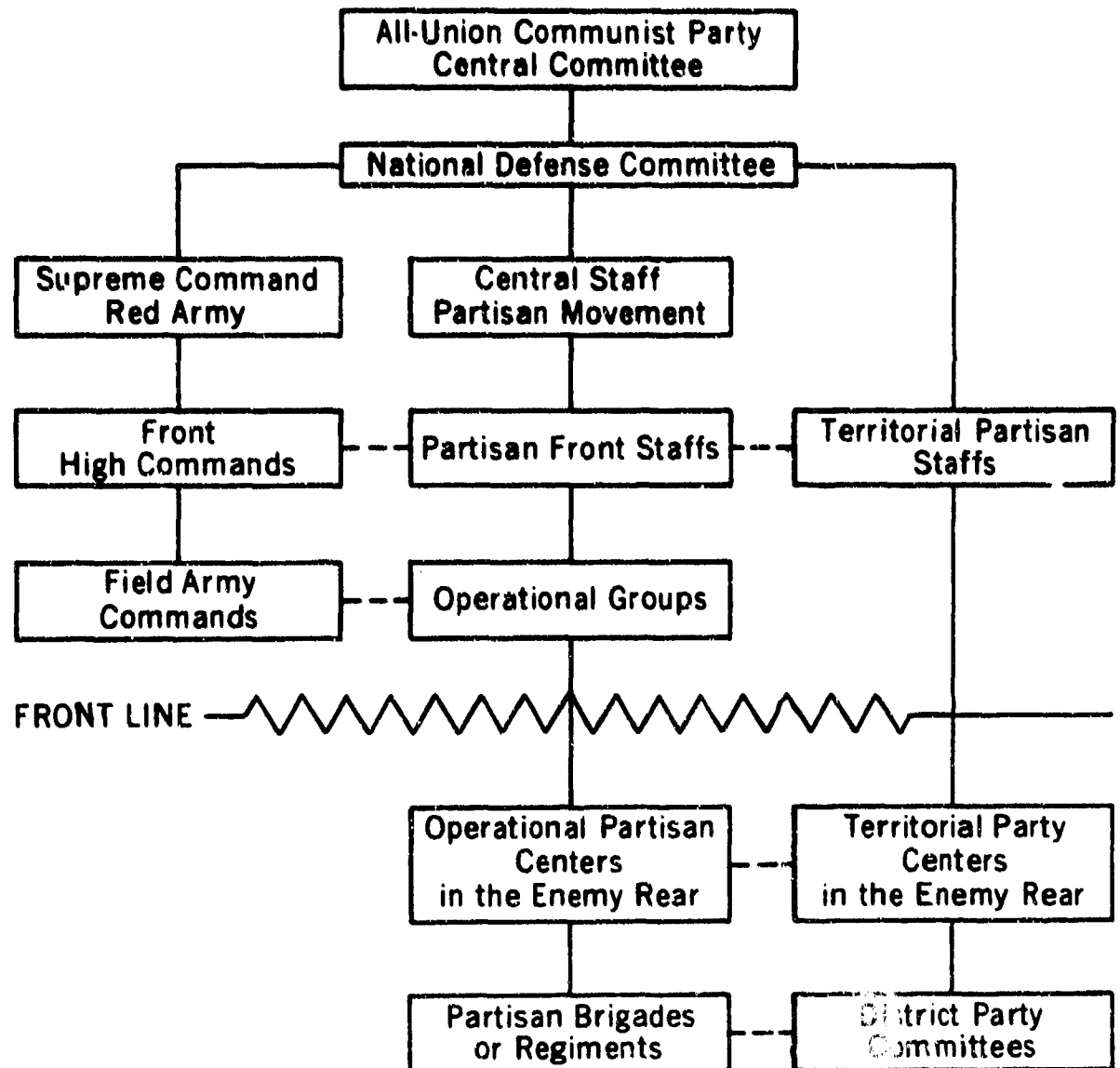
The central staff controlled the partisan front staffs, which were organized at the level of the various army front headquarters. Thus, for example, the Kalinin Front, West Front, and Bryansk Front, which together opposed the German Army Group Center, were each paralleled by a partisan front staff, whose function it was to pass on directives received from the central staff, issue additional orders for its own sector in coordination with the front staff, handle personnel and logistical matters, and collect intelligence data. On the level of each field army, a partisan operational group fulfilled similar missions on a commensurately narrower scale.

Organisation of Partisans Behind German Lines

In the German rear areas, the partisan movement retained a dual chain of command—partisan and party. Operational partisan centers, similar in structure to the operational groups, were established to control partisan operations over large areas. They received their orders from their corresponding operational groups and in some instances from higher partisan staffs, including the central staff.

Next in the chain of command were the partisan brigades, sometimes also referred to or designated as regiments. The brigades had developed from the otryady, often by absorbing one or more of them during the period of expansion. The partisan units of 1941 had rarely exceeded 300 men. By 1942, however, the new brigades numbered 1,000 to 2,000 members and sometimes more. The size of a brigade was governed by practical considerations: on the one hand, the shortage of qualified commanders and the need for control and sustained operations made it imperative to enlarge the otryady; on the other hand, the strength of the brigades had to be tailored to match the resources of a given base area and the available means of communications and control. Units that grew too large became attractive targets for large-scale countermeasures

ORGANIZATION OF THE SOVIET PARTISAN MOVEMENT AFTER SPRING 1942



and faced destruction. There was a great deal of variation in the organization of brigades, but most were subdivided into battalions. In some instances a partisan division command was created as an intermediate headquarters between partisan centers and brigades or independent regiments.

The Communist party held the reins through two channels. One was through a commissar and an NKVD official operating on the level of the military commander at all echelons of the

Red army and the partisan movement. The other channel was through the National Defense Committee and territorial partisan staffs, territorial party centers in the German rear, and district party committees in the occupied areas. At corresponding levels in the enemy rear, the party territorial organization and the partisan movement closely coordinated their missions.

Logistics and Discipline

Logistic support for the partisan movement, which had been haphazard in 1941, was tightly controlled after the new organization took hold. Ammunition, weapons, explosives, medical supplies, spare parts, and even the morale builders of tobacco, liquor, and mail were airdropped or landed on partisan-built landing strips. Key personnel were brought in and casualties—even some prisoners of war—taken out on a regular basis. Allotment and shipment of supplies was from major supply bases to subsidiary bases, and this distribution was regularly handled by supply sections. For staples the partisans continued to rely on local resources. During the last phase of the war, partisan supply developed into a large-scale logistical operation, but although partisan units were often heavily armed, in some areas even with tanks and crew-operated weapons, they were not nearly so well equipped as regular units. The Soviet command determined the flow of supplies and could gauge the expected success of any operation by the degree of support it could make available. Recalcitrant units and those that showed poor internal discipline could be brought to heel simply by withholding supplies, and the central staff never hesitated to use this method.

Discipline became a real problem after the rapid expansion of the partisan units. Later conscripts proved less willing or able than the first recruits to accept the rigid disciplinary standards that had prevailed earlier. The Soviets were able to maintain discipline only through continuous, determined efforts of the military commanders, commissars, and party officials. Often draconian measures had to be taken, including the shooting of culprits before assembled partisan units. By this means and because the Germans regularly shot "bandits" even when they surrendered, desertions were held to the relatively low level of 10 percent or less.

Such was the organizational structure, implemented early in 1942, of the Soviet partisan movement. That structure provided the basis for the growth and expansion of the movement and converted it into a formidable instrument of Soviet defense.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

The German attack on the U.S.S.R. in June 1941 followed Adolf Hitler's decision to destroy the Soviet Union, to take possession of European Russia as far east as the Volga River and as far south as Astrakhan, and to dominate these large territories by a combination of military, political, and economic measures. After this, he reasoned, he would be master of the European continent and thus in an unassailable position.

Next Plans for the Invasion of Russia

Between July 1940 and June 1941, German political and military agencies worked on plans for the campaign against and the occupation of Russia. Specific plans dealt with a blitz campaign, to be conducted and successfully concluded in the summer of 1941, and with the military occupation, political administration, and economic exploitation to follow. To some degree the execution of these plans influenced the rise and development of guerrilla activities in the Soviet Union.

The military campaign plan, BARBAROSSA, assigned to three army groups—North, Center, and South—the mission of crushing the Soviet armed forces in the western border zone by a series of deep penetrations combined with successive encirclements, employing large armored forces as spearheads. A total of 142 German and the equivalent of 40 other Axis divisions, and some 3,000 tanks and planes were to be committed to the campaign. Hitler was bent on two main thrusts, one aiming at Leningrad in the north, the other at Stalingrad and the Caucasus in the south. The army, on the other hand, intended to drive straight for Moscow. The Germans never resolved these conflicting strategic concepts. Vacillating from one to the other and in the end combining them, the German High Command lost the advantage of concentrating its force, wasted time unnecessarily, and ultimately failed to obtain even one of its main objectives.¹⁴

To Hitler, the war with Russia was more than just another military campaign. His political objectives were to "destroy Bolshevism root and branch" and divide Russia into "socialist states dependent on Germany." Later he summed up his policy as "first: conquer; second: rule; third: exploit."¹⁵ The army's place in this scheme was confined to defeating the Soviet armed forces. Hitler deliberately curtailed the army's jurisdiction: as it advanced east, the army was to pass the responsibility for administering the conquered rear areas on to a political administration.

Administration of German-Occupied Areas and Rear Area Security

This political administration was delegated to a newly created ministry under the Reich Minister for Occupied Eastern Territories, Alfred Rosenberg, and to its subordinate reich commissariats that were to operate in the Baltic States, Belorussia, the Ukraine, and—so went the plans—Moscow and the Caucasus. Heinrich Himmler—who as Reichsführer SS (Schutzstaffeln der Nationalsozialistischen Deutschen Arbeiterpartei) headed a Nazi party organization having unusual political, military, and police functions—was empowered to "clean up" these areas by eliminating all Communist functionaries and other "undesirables." The army protested against these so-called Commissar Orders as senseless and potentially damaging to rear area security. Hitler's answer was to authorize the SS to extend its activities right into the tactical operations zone.

Deprived of an overall rear area security mission, the army assigned the responsibility for such security functions as it retained to its chief of supply and administration (G-4) and his

counterparts on the army group and army levels. For administrative purposes, the army groups and field armies subdivided their rear areas into regional, rural district, and urban areas. Rear area security was thus removed from the operational chain of command.

On the premise that the campaign would be so short that the Russians could not raise an effective partisan movement, and owing to manpower shortages, the German army planners decided to forgo organizing special counter guerrilla forces. For guarding supply routes and installations, controlling traffic, and handling prisoners of war, the army high command assigned three security divisions to each army group. A typical security division comprised one infantry regiment, one artillery battalion, and some national guard and police battalions. Except for certain specialized units, these were the forces whose principal mission would be to deal with the guerrillas. The security divisions probably had a complement of 100,000 men in 1941 and up to 150,000 in 1943, a number too small to cope with the growing partisan movement. They were poorly equipped and organized, and they lacked mobility. Their greatest deficiency, however, was their lack of training for guerrilla warfare.

The German decision not to organize counter guerrilla forces was soon seen to have been a mistake. The first incidents of guerrilla activity occurred within days of the German attack and forced combat units to turn back to pacify sectors in their rear instead of executing their primary missions. Even after security forces had been assigned, their inadequacy in numbers and capabilities required the diversion of combat elements for rear area security tasks. Field commanders were thus confronted with the dilemma of continuously having to decide between carrying out operations at their front or at their rear. The problem of countering guerrilla activity proved to be insoluble because, from the very beginning, the Germans approached it defensively.

Germans Gain Experience With Antiguerilla Operations

German counter guerrilla operations may be divided into three phases coinciding with the development of the Soviet partisan movement: June-December 1941, January-August 1942, and September 1942-July 1944.

During the first phase, the Germans had an important advantage in that the partisans did not have the support of the people. Many elements of the population hoped to win German support so as to achieve at least a modest degree of political freedom, while the masses of the people were passive and did not oppose the occupation.

Most guerrilla activities were on a small-unit scale and German counter operations generally did not involve units larger than divisions. Indeed, in most cases only battalions and regiments were involved. German tactics generally consisted of guarding main lines of communications and applying normal security precautions at headquarters and installations. When partisan bands caused trouble in specific areas, the Germans launched a large-scale attack that

usually succeeded in dispersing or eliminating them. The ratio of partisans to antiguerrilla forces in these engagements averaged about one to eight. The usual tactical maneuver was encirclement and concentric attack. These tactics were most successful in the Ukraine, where the terrain and the relatively small number of partisans favored the German approach. They were least effective in the central and northern sectors of the conquered areas, where large numbers of partisans were operating.

Germans Codify Their Tactics

By the fall of 1941, enough first-hand experience had been gathered that the army high command could issue guidelines for antiguerrilla warfare. These reflected the situation at the time and proposed tactical remedies, but did not take into sufficient account the underlying causes of the partisan movement, which were political, psychological, and economic. In any case, it was impossible for the army to adopt measures that would counteract the political blunders of Nazi functionaries in the occupied areas.

The army high command distinguished five types of antiguerrilla measures. Pacification operations, involving the complete occupation by troop detachments of all significant localities in a partisan-controlled area, were effective but time-consuming and exceeded the army's capability. Large-scale operations, in which partisan groups were encircled and destroyed by far superior forces through concentric maneuver, were also an effective method, provided enough troops could be assembled to draw a tight ring around the guerrillas and their stronghold. Small-scale operations usually consisted of attacks by relatively small-unit strike forces on specific objectives, such as guerrilla armed camps; such attacks made the utmost use of the elements of surprise and prior intelligence. Mopping-up operations, employed after a partisan unit had been broken up by some other action, were intended to clear an area or supply line. The establishment of strongpoints was a defensive measure designed to protect certain localities containing troops, headquarters, or supplies and was used most often along lines of communications.¹⁶

Germans Recruit Local People Who Do Not Support Partisans

In areas under its control, the German army soon resorted to recruiting indigenous formations, which were quite successfully employed in police and guard duty and in intelligence work. A wide variety of units was organized, among them the auxiliary guard and service troops (Hilfswachmannschaften or "Hiwi's"), engineer groups, and local auxiliary police (Ordnungsdienst). The Germans also made extensive use of locally recruited agents (Vertrauensleute or "V-Leute"). These indigenous forces materially assisted local administration, conserved German manpower, and helped to restrict partisan activities.

During the first phase of counter guerrilla operations, in the last half of 1941, the Germans were successful because the partisans were unorganized and the people did not support them. It

was a period of experimentation for the Germans. There was not enough time, however, to apply the new guidelines before one of the worst winters in Russian history combined with German military defeats to frustrate such gains as the Germans had been able to make against the guerrillas.

As Winter Sets In, Army Commanders Stress Intelligence and Payoffs

The second phase of counterguerrilla operations began with the German halt before Moscow in December 1941. Throughout the winter months, it took every ounce of German strength and every last man to hold the front and to guard 'the tenuous supply lines. Large areas in the armies' rear were thus stripped of garrisons and fell prey to the partisans. Disintegration of sections along the German front allowed the Russians to establish corridors to many partisan areas. The three largest stronghold positions were east and northwest of Vitebsk, north and south of Bryansk, and in the Yelnya-Dorogobuzh area south of the Smolensk-Vyazma railroad.

German commanders, meantime, had begun to apply the new doctrine and techniques in an effort to counter the growing partisan threat. They improved their intelligence capabilities through radio intelligence, reconnaissance prisoner interrogations, and agents. Commanders were therefore generally well informed about partisan strength, dispositions, and intentions.

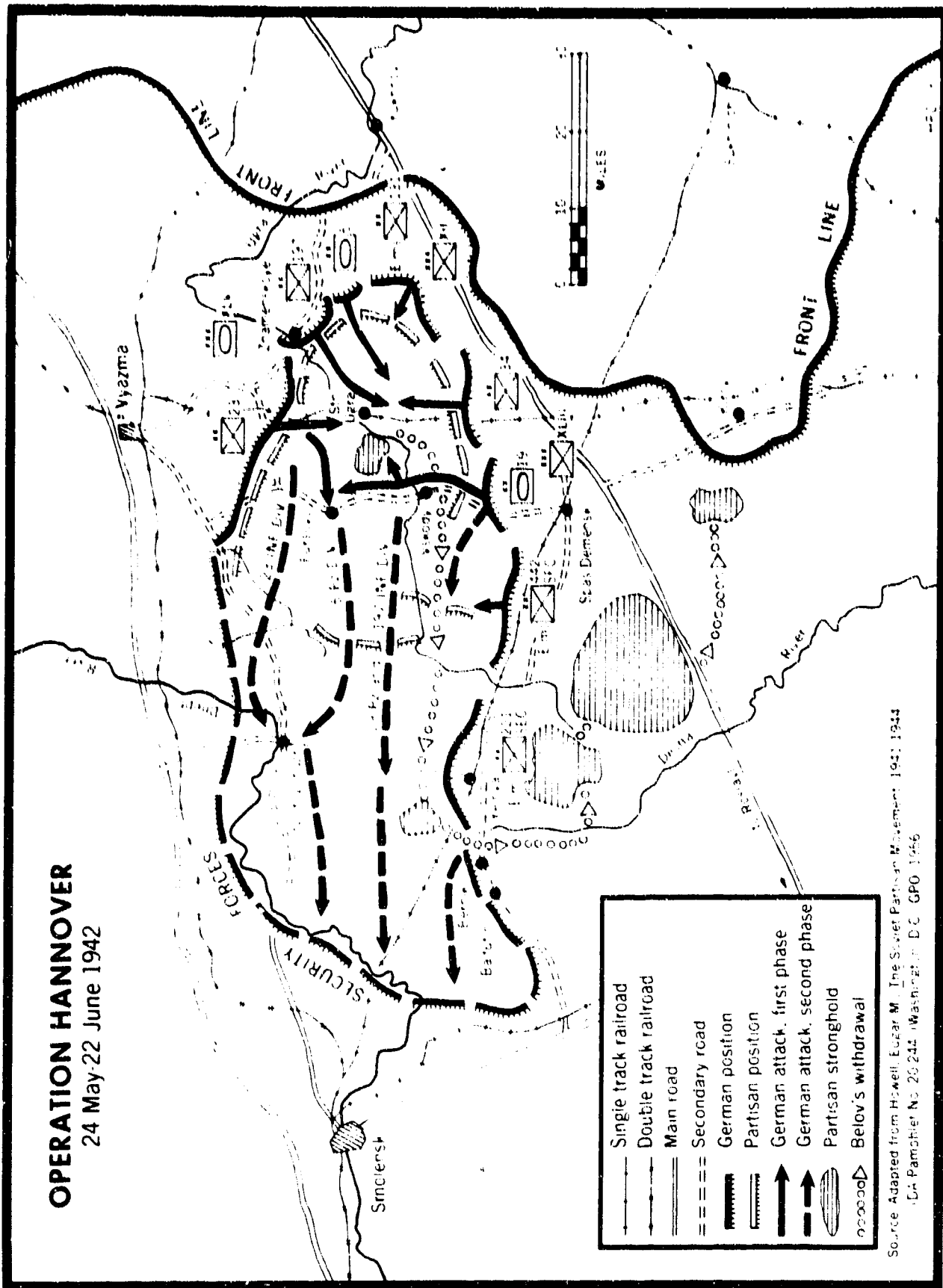
The German army also made progress in some of its propaganda efforts. For the first time, promises were given that the lives of commissars would be spared if they surrendered; and this policy sometimes brought unexpectedly good results. Within their narrow jurisdictions, some field armies unofficially instituted a policy of encouraging defections. Psychological advantages also accrued from the fact that many Russians served the Germans in indigenous police units.

Limitations on Antiguerilla Operations

In counterguerrilla operations the Germans were hampered by limitations of strength. Their operations had to be highly selective and, since they required the use of sorely needed combat forces that had to be withdrawn temporarily from the front, could be launched only when the situation had become critical, or when results appeared to be extraordinarily promising.

By the spring of 1942, rear area commanders were no longer able to cope with the partisan threat to their lines of communications. The Germans were now forced to commit entire combat divisions, supplemented by security and indigenous forces and supported by planes, in carefully planned and meticulously executed encirclement operations, if they wished to pacify a large partisan-controlled area. They tried to compensate for the shortage of troops with intensive air raids and strafing of recognized partisan strongholds. In addition to the physical damage that could be inflicted on base camps, air attacks appeared to be effective in breaking down partisan morale. But the Luftwaffe never had enough planes to exploit this opportunity.

OPERATION HANNOVER 24 May-22 June 1942



Operation HANNOVER Breaks Up Soviet Group Belov

A good example of the type of large-scale operations the Germans launched in the spring and summer of 1942 was Operation HANNOVER. The Germans committed elements of three corps, with seven divisions and numerous smaller units, numbering 18,000 to 20,000 men,* under the direction of the Fourth Army. They were deployed against Soviet Group Belov, consisting of an estimated 18,000 partisans and regular forces that the Red army had infiltrated.

The area in which Soviet Group Belov held complete control was located southwest of Vynazma, between Yelnya and Dorogobuzh. It measured about 70 miles in length and 40 miles across. To eliminate Belov, the Germans encircled the entire area; then, in operations lasting a full month (May 24 to June 22, 1942), they attacked from three sides, driving the partisans against the Fourth, pinching off sizable elements in two successive encirclements, before pushing the remnants against a final blocking position. The hard core of Belov's group broke out of the tightening ring during the last phase, but most were wiped out in subsequent pursuit. The Germans inflicted casualties of about 18,000, including over 5,000 killed, and they captured or destroyed 16 tanks, 251 guns, and 15 planes. Approximately 2,000 guerrillas somehow managed to hide.

The Germans followed up the operation with a program of political pacification, which was greatly simplified by the fact that few males were left in the area. Efforts were made to win the support of the inhabitants and convince them that their lot would be eased if they cooperated by forming self-defense units and reporting partisans to the German authorities. These efforts were so successful that the Soviet command was unable to revive the partisan movement in this area despite repeated efforts.

Nevertheless, the Germans paid heavily for their success. They lost about 500 men killed and 1,500 wounded or missing—less than 15 percent of partisan losses but 10 percent of their own strength. The fact that Belov and his closest collaborators were able to escape proved to the Germans that they had not concentrated enough troops for the initial operation. The operation also showed that, given adequate resources, time, and support, regular troops could eliminate the partisans even in forbidding terrain. On the other hand, it should be pointed out that Operation HANNOVER was not representative of the German counterguerrilla effort. It showed what could be done under favorable circumstances, but these did not prevail in most of the German rear areas. In the sectors under its jurisdiction, the German army had developed new and efficient methods, but it lacked sufficient means to apply them. The army was thus unable to destroy the partisans before the Russian armies took the offensive.

*At that time German divisions were at best about half strength.

As Germans Begin To Pull Back, They Come Increasingly Into Conflict With Partisans

The last phase of German counterguerrilla operations began in the fall of 1942. German armies had reached as far as the Caucasus and Stalingrad, but then the fortunes of war changed. Stalingrad was the turning signal. On February 2, 1943, 22 German divisions, reduced to 280,000 men and cut off at Stalingrad from the rest of the German army, surrendered. From then on the Red army steadily rolled back the German lines. The great withdrawal began at the western approach to the Volga and ended in the summer of 1944 on the banks of the Vistula. As the German army fell back, it crowded into areas where the partisans had thrived with relative impunity. Although German supply lines were now shorter and should have been easier to guard, the partisan movement had grown into a more formidable threat. The Germans countered with a series of large-scale counterguerrilla operations and intensification of local antipartisan actions. To conserve their own forces, they used non-German Axis troops in security missions, and recruited and employed indigenous units.

The German army had learned during the winter crisis of 1941-42 that only aggressive tactics could check the partisans. Holding garrisons and outposts, perfunctorily patrolling partisan-infested areas, and making occasional sweeps or strikes at recognized strongholds meant remaining permanently on the defensive. It had become abundantly clear that rear area security troops alone could not contain the guerrillas. Combat troops had to be committed, pressure maintained, and the support of the people won.

Hitler Approves a New Army Policy But German Authority Remains Divided

Some steps in the right direction had already been taken. The army staff had made the first move in the spring of 1941 by enjoining subordinate commands to refrain from indiscriminate collective reprisals. In August 1942, the army high command shifted the responsibility for counterguerrilla operations from the chief of supply and administration to the deputy chief of staff for operations. This decision reflected the fact that counterguerrilla operations had become as vital as operations at the front and acknowledged that both areas of operations were interdependent. Experience also had shown that tactical commanders were more eager to commit combat forces in antipartisan operations if they were given control.

Hitler sanctioned the new army policy on August 18, 1942.¹ Not only was the war against the partisans to be considered a part of general operations, but military means were to be combined with political, economic, and psychological measures. In an attempt to pacify an increasingly hostile population, assurances were to be given of at least a minimum subsistence level in the standard of living, and rewards were to be offered to those who would collaborate against the guerrillas. Reluctantly, Hitler also approved the recruitment of native Russians for the

formation of indigenous military and paramilitary units—which had in a number of cases already been quietly accomplished—and their commitment in counterguerrilla operations.¹⁴

Although control of operations was placed in the hands of tactical commanders and the dual chain of command in the military establishment had thus been abolished, division of responsibility persisted outside the army combat zone and rear areas. Behind them, Himmler was given sole responsibility for all antipartisan actions, operating through the reich commissars and the military governors. The authority of the SS was also broadened to encompass the collection and evaluation of all intelligence on the partisan movement.

A Series of New Moves To Counter the Partisan Warfare

To overcome the perennial shortage of security forces, Hitler ordered army training and replacement units, schools, and air force ground installations redeployed from Germany to areas under partisan pressure. He directed that security forces that had been pressed into frontline duty be returned to their primary function. The term "partisan," connoting freedom fighter, was to be replaced by "bandit," in a psychological move designed to discredit the guerrillas.

Himmler and the Armed Forces High Command (OKW) both issued formal directives on specific tactics and procedures for counterguerrilla operations in September and November 1942.¹⁵ The most important of these new instructions dealt with intelligence, population control, and the use of indigenous personnel. Tactics remained essentially unchanged.

The most useful source of German intelligence was the monitoring of Soviet radio broadcasts; interrogations of local residents and agents' reports often filled in essential details about Soviet intentions. To seek out partisan units and test the loyalty of the inhabitants, the Germans formed mock partisan bands. All residents were registered and the movements of non-residents controlled.

A Network of Strongpoints and Armed Interlocking Villages Protected by Local Units

The Germans originated a system of interlocking strongpoints along main supply arteries and raised self-defense units in the villages under their administration. They were thus able to spread a network of armed villages (Wehrdörfer)—precursors of strategic hamlets—across many districts, and they reinforced the system by providing reliable signal communications.

~~In an extension of their strongpoint system, they declared that strips up to 10 miles wide along~~
the supply routes were security zones and patrolled them with mobile commando groups (Jagdkommandos).

In villages the Germans raised auxiliary police forces (Ordnungsdienst or OD) to maintain order and provide local security under the direction of appointed mayors. In regions under

heavy partisan pressure, the OD was reinforced by militia units (Milizgruppen) of up to battalion strength. The objective was to provide each district with one militia battalion, subsequently renamed civil guard (Volkswehr) battalion. The expansion of the militia led in 1943 to the establishment of the Osttruppen or eastern troops, which resembled a foreign legion.

The number of indigenous forces could be quite impressive, as the example of the larger Bryansk area shows. The eastern portion of the Bryansk area, under the control of the Second Panzer Army, had 13 eastern troop and 12 civil guard battalions. In the western portion, under the control of Army Group Center, the 221st Security Division built 119 armed villages and manned them with 10,000 OD men.³⁰

Experiments in Local Autonomy: Kaminsky and Vlasov

In the Lokot district, some 50 miles south of Bryansk, Hitler had in one instance already permitted an experiment in quasi-autonomous government. A Russian collaborator by the name of Bronislav Kaminsky took charge of the district and formed a brigade of 12 battalions. Disciplined, mobile, and well armed, Kaminsky's followers numbered 9,000 men by the fall of 1942. With this force, he not only kept his own district free of partisans, but supplied German authorities with antipartisan units for employment in neighboring districts. While it lasted, the district was a model of successful antipartisan control achieved by gaining the support of the people.³¹

Another opportunity for rallying the Russian people in the occupied territories was handed the Germans when captured Gen. Andrei A. Vlasov lent himself to form a movement and army known by his name. It was to be organized from among Russian prisoners of war for the purpose of uniting all Russians in an anti-Communist state. Although Vlasov had some success, especially in the field of psychological warfare, the very existence of such a movement ran counter to Hitler's long-range plans. Not until 1944, when it was much too late, did Vlasov obtain official German recognition.

Germans Fail To Exploit Russian Grievances

The German failure to exploit fully and completely the various collaborative indigenous movements was a singular mistake in itself, but it betrayed the basic Nazi view that the Slavs were Untermenschen, or inferior people. German activity in a number of spheres--the harsh treatment of prisoners of war, the cruel administration of forced labor, the unalleviated food shortages, the closing of local schools--provided realistic corroboration of their basic attitude toward the local peoples.

Given this view of the Slavs, it is not surprising that the Germans failed to take advantage of perhaps the principal means by which they might have obtained widespread popular support--by dividing the Soviet collective farms among the peasants, the largest population group in the

occupied zone. Plans for land reform were sporadically implemented, with some success, during 1941, and agrarian reform actually became policy in February 1942. In the areas under Nazi administration, land reform was often viewed coldly, but some reforms were instituted in army areas. In general, the reforms were poorly conceived and, in practice, the initially anti-Soviet peasant—who, under the Germans as under the Soviets, could not own land but had to meet crop quotas—was unable to perceive any advantage in a foreign administration. Even the religious issue was not exploited by the Germans; for example, German chaplains were not allowed to minister to the local population. The effect of these policies was to confirm the Soviet population's utter disillusionment with the Germans. With the battle for popular support lost through conditions beyond its control, the German army turned to military means to combat the partisan menace.

Large-Scale Operations Against Guerrillas in the Bryansk Area

Typical examples of counterguerrilla operations in 1943 are provided by actions the Second Panzer Army took in May and June of that year in the Bryansk area. During the twelve months preceding May 1943, the Germans had eliminated an estimated 5,000 guerrillas and had evacuated several thousand local residents. However, in the spring of 1943, the partisans were averaging 90 attacks a month, mostly against lines of communications—some 550 miles of roads and railroads. None of these attacks crippled German supply, but about half of them caused delays of up to twelve hours. Partisan strength in the greater Bryansk area fluctuated between 10,000 and 20,000, with half concentrated in the forests south of the town and the other half unevenly divided between the northern and western sectors. They were supported by a large number of local sympathizers. The partisans presented a great danger to the Germans in the event of a general Soviet offensive in the area, and the Second Panzer Army realized that it must deal with this threat while it could.

The panzer army planned five separate, coordinated, and large-scale operations for May and June 1943, committing an estimated 50,000 men. The two largest and most effective operations were FREISCHÜTZ, north of Bryansk, and ZIGEUNERBARON, in the southern forest. Both were executed by regular combat forces, each under an army corps. The panzer army had little time to plan the operations because the troops were needed for the planned German summer offensive at Orel; nor could enough troops be assigned to accomplish a thorough clean-up operation. Military operations were further complicated by the planned evacuation of very large contingents of the local population. In what had become a standard procedure, the partisan units were encircled and then driven against a terrain feature selected as the best blocking position. Generally, the partisans at first avoided being drawn into a set-piece battle and withdrew. When cornered, the hard core and the leaders broke out and escaped, but not without suffering very severe personnel and material losses and the destruction of their camps.

In the five operations in the Bryansk forests, the Germans killed or captured some 7,000 partisans and evacuated about 35,000 inhabitants, while losing some 200 killed and 600 wounded. The bands were routed and dispersed, losing their strongholds and their sources of food, shelter, and supplies. But about half of the partisans got away. With massive Soviet support, delivered mainly by air, they reorganized and attempted to resume their activities within a few weeks. The panzer army, however, kept up the pressure with a series of eight smaller operations late in June. Given more troops, time, and air support, the Germans might have eliminated the remaining partisans, who were now deprived of their supporting population. But events at the front precluded full commitment and exploitation.

Defense of Lines of Communications During the German Withdrawal

The war in Russia, now stretching into its third year, cut deeper and deeper into the German army's strength. The attrition showed most revealingly in the reduced quality and capabilities of security forces and air force. The Luftwaffe was no longer able to prevent reinforcement and supply of the partisan movement, an effort to which the Soviet command committed more and more of its air strength.

To hold their own, the Germans were forced to employ increasing numbers of security units: some 150 German battalions, 90 collaborator battalions, 30 satellite battalions, and about 50,000 indigenous auxiliary police, which added up to about a quarter of a million men. In addition, Hitler was compelled to shift ten training and reserve divisions to the rear areas in the east. These military security measures succeeded in keeping the German supply lines open and rear installations reasonably safe during the final German withdrawal from Russia. The achievement was limited, but the requirements of fighting a total war and the restrictions under which the army had to operate made it impossible to pacify the occupied areas.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

The three-year struggle between the Soviet partisans and the German occupation forces was decided by the victory of the Red army over the Wehrmacht. In this victory, Soviet guerrillas aided the Soviet army. The significance of Russian partisan warfare lay in the fact that it emerged as a new weapon, to be reckoned with henceforth as an instrument of strategy and even of national policy.

The Russians in 1941 had been quick to realize the potential of a partisan movement and had employed it with determination in both defensive and offensive operations. Partisan activities may be judged by their objectives and the degree of their accomplishments.

Partisan Objectives and Achievements Reviewed

Partisan objectives were military, economic, and political in nature. Military missions were to harass the occupation forces, inflict maximum damage on installations and communications, and gather intelligence. The economic objective was to reduce or prevent German exploitation of the occupied areas. The political aim was to maintain the allegiance to the Soviet Union and its Communist regime of the Russian population under German domination.

The Soviet partisans were most successful in their military objectives. By adopting an organization and chain of command suitable to the missions of the partisan movement and the environment in which it had to operate, the Soviet leadership in effect created a fourth service and used it as a formidable weapon against the German invaders. Guerrillas killed an estimated 35,000 occupation troops, executed innumerable acts of sabotage, and provided valuable intelligence. But their main achievement lay in their continued presence behind German lines, where they spread insecurity, fear, and terror. They forced the Germans to assign tens of thousands of security troops to the never-ending task of protecting communications and rear area installations, and to divert combat divisions from the front. The partisans accomplished this at a small expense to the Soviet war effort because the hundreds of thousands of Russians in the occupied territories could not have served their country's cause in any other way.

Nevertheless, the partisan movement had its limitations. It could persist because the Germans failed to deal with it effectively. Partisans could operate only in favorable terrain and with massive outside support. The rapid growth of the movement diluted its units and made them vulnerable to German countermeasures. Large units lost their mobility and often were trapped in encirclements by regular forces. In such battles the partisans were invariably defeated and their usefulness, even if they avoided destruction, was greatly impaired, usually for long periods of time.

In the economic field, the partisans were unable to reduce materially the German exploitation of the country, largely because they did not control the economically vital areas such as the big cities and especially the Ukraine.

The success of the partisan movement in maintaining a political hold over the population in occupied areas was not so much the result of adroitness as of intimidation and, above all, the stupidity and ruthlessness of German occupation policies. Even so, more than a million Soviet citizens actively collaborated with the Germans; and millions more, by their indifference and passivity, abetted Nazi designs.

Some Lessons From the German Experience

The Germans, on the other hand, had initially underestimated the threat that guerrillas might present to their rear area security. When the danger suddenly became real, they lacked the techniques and the means to meet the challenge. Preoccupied with tactical operations and

hampered by a lack of manpower, their counter guerrilla operations and security measures were palliative, largely designed to keep the disease from spreading, but not to eliminate its causes.

A basic reason for the German failure in counter guerrilla operations lay in Hitler's policies of exploiting the occupied areas whatever the cost to the Soviet population. Militarily, German anti guerrilla efforts were hurt by Hitler's insistence on dividing responsibility between military and political agencies. The lack of central direction was compounded by inconsistent policies, a dismal shortage of troops, and an essentially defensive attitude. The Germans did little to compensate for the partisans' advantage of favorable terrain.

The early decision to bypass the swamps and forests and the subsequent failure to clean them out thoroughly proved to be mistakes that could not be remedied. Vital lines of communications cut through these very regions and thus were vulnerable to partisan attacks. The device of building strongpoints and clearing strips astride the main supply routes seemed to be the answer to making the supply lines secure, but the Germans never had the forces to fully implement this technique.

The Germans could not cut off outside support for the partisans, and they could not isolate them from their local support, whether voluntary or impressed. Most importantly, the Germans failed to create a climate of confidence and trust between themselves and the Russian people. Under these circumstances, the most effective German measures proved to be large-scale counter guerrilla operations and the establishment of armed villages protected by indigenous militia and civil guard units, backed by German security forces.

In World War II the Soviets used guerrilla warfare as a weapon in support of their regular army in both defensive and offensive operations. Since then, the Soviets have both fought insurgents in areas under their control and supported guerrilla warfare as a tool of insurgency in various non-Communist countries. In these new applications, the Communists have drawn upon many of the techniques used in World War II; it is to be hoped that the free world will also benefit from both the lessons and mistakes of the German experience in Russia.

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¹Edgar M. Howell, The Soviet Partisan Movement 1941-1944 (DA Pamphlet 20-244; Washington: Department of the Army, 1956), p. 203.

²Theodore Shabad, Geography of the U.S.S.R., A Regional Survey (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951).

³The "Background" section is based primarily on Charles V. P. von Luttichau, Guerrilla and Counterguerrilla Warfare in Russia During World War II (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1962), ch. 1.

⁴Department of the Army Pamphlets: No. 20-290, Terrain Factors in the Russian Campaign (Washington: Department of the Army, 1951); No. 20-291, Effects of Climate on Combat in European Russia (Washington: Department of the Army, 1952); and No. 20-231, Combat in Russian Forests and Swamps (Washington: Department of the Army, 1951).

⁵OKH, GenStdH, General der Pioniere und Festungen beim ObdH, Denkschrift über russische Landesbefestigungen (Berlin: Reichsdruckerei, 1942), pp. 2ff.

⁶See statements by Reich Marshal Hermann Goering (pp. 239, 240), Alfred Rosenberg (p. 241), Himmler (p. 237), etc., re German disinterest in the welfare of occupied Soviet citizens, cited in International Military Tribunal, Trial of the Major War Criminals Before the International Military Tribunal (Nuremberg: International Military Tribunal, 1947), I, pp. cited above and *passim*.

⁷The text of this address is reproduced in Joseph Stalin, The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union (New York: International Publishers, 1945), pp. 9-17.

⁸Von Luttichau, Guerrilla and Counterguerrilla Warfare in Russia, pp. 50-51; and A. Fyodorov, The Underground Carries On (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1952), p. 15.

⁹Von Luttichau, Guerrilla and Counterguerrilla Warfare in Russia, *passim*. Except where another source is cited, the material that follows is based on this work.

¹⁰John Armstrong and Kurt DeWitt, Organization and Control of the Partisan Movement (Columbia University, War Documentation Project (WDP) "Alexander," Research Study No. 8, Vol. 4; Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air Research and Development Command, Human Resources Research Institute, 1954); Earl Ziemke, The Soviet Partisan Movement in 1941 (Columbia University, War Documentation Project "Alexander," Research Study No. 6, Vol. 2; Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air Research and Development Command, Human Resources Research Institute, 1954).

¹¹See Gerhard L. Weinberg (ed.), Selected Soviet Sources on the Partisan Movement in World War II (Columbia University, War Documentation Project "Alexander," Research Memorandum No. 26, Vol. 1; Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air Research and Development Command, Human Resources Research Institute, 1954), Docs. 1-7.

¹²Armstrong and DeWitt, Organization and Control, pp. 13-44; Howell, The Soviet Partisan Movement, pp. 77-85, 93-96.

¹³Fyodorov, The Underground Carries On, pp. 511ff.

¹⁴George E. Blau, The German Campaign in Russia, Planning and Operations, 1940-1942 (DA Pamphlet No. 20-281a; Washington: Department of the Army, 1951).

¹⁸Entwürfe zum Kriegstagebuch des Wehrmachtsführungsstabes (Abteilung Landesverteidigung) vom 1. 12. 1940-42. 3. 1941, by Ministerialrat Helmuth Greiner (U.S. Department of the Army, Office, Chief of Military History, MS No. C-065-k); Howell, The Soviet Partisan Movement, pp. 9-23; and Trial of the Major War Criminals, Doc. No. 221-L, in XXXVIII, pp. 86-94.

¹⁹ObdH, GenStH, Ausb. Abt., "Richtlinien für Partisanenbekämpfung," 25 Oct. 41; EAP 99/38-X/4, cited in Ziemke, The Soviet Partisan Movement in 1941, pp. 73-74.

²⁰Directive No. 40, "Richtlinien für die verstärkte Bekämpfung des Bandenunwesens im Osten, 19 Aug. 42," in U.S. Navy ONI Führer Directives and Other Top Level Directives of the German Armed Forces, 1939-1945.

²¹OKH, GenStH, Org. Abt., Kriegstagebuch, Band IV, I. 8.-31. 12. 42, 11-20 Aug. 42; H1/214.

²²Howell, The Soviet Partisan Movement, pp. 118-20, n. 8 and 12.

²³Kurt DeWitt and Wilhelm Moll, The Partisan Movement in the Bryansk Area, 1941-1943 (Columbia University, War Documentation Project "Alexander," Technical Research Report No. 24, Vol. 6; Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air Research and Development Command, Human Resources Research Institute, 1954), pp. 64-69.

²⁴When the Germans were forced to evacuate the area, they resettled Kaminsky and his followers—6,000 soldiers and 25,000 civilians. See Dallin, The Kaminsky Brigade: 1941-1944 (Columbia University, War Documentation Project "Alexander," Technical Research Report No. 7; Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University, 1952); Howell, The Soviet Partisan Movement, p. 89.

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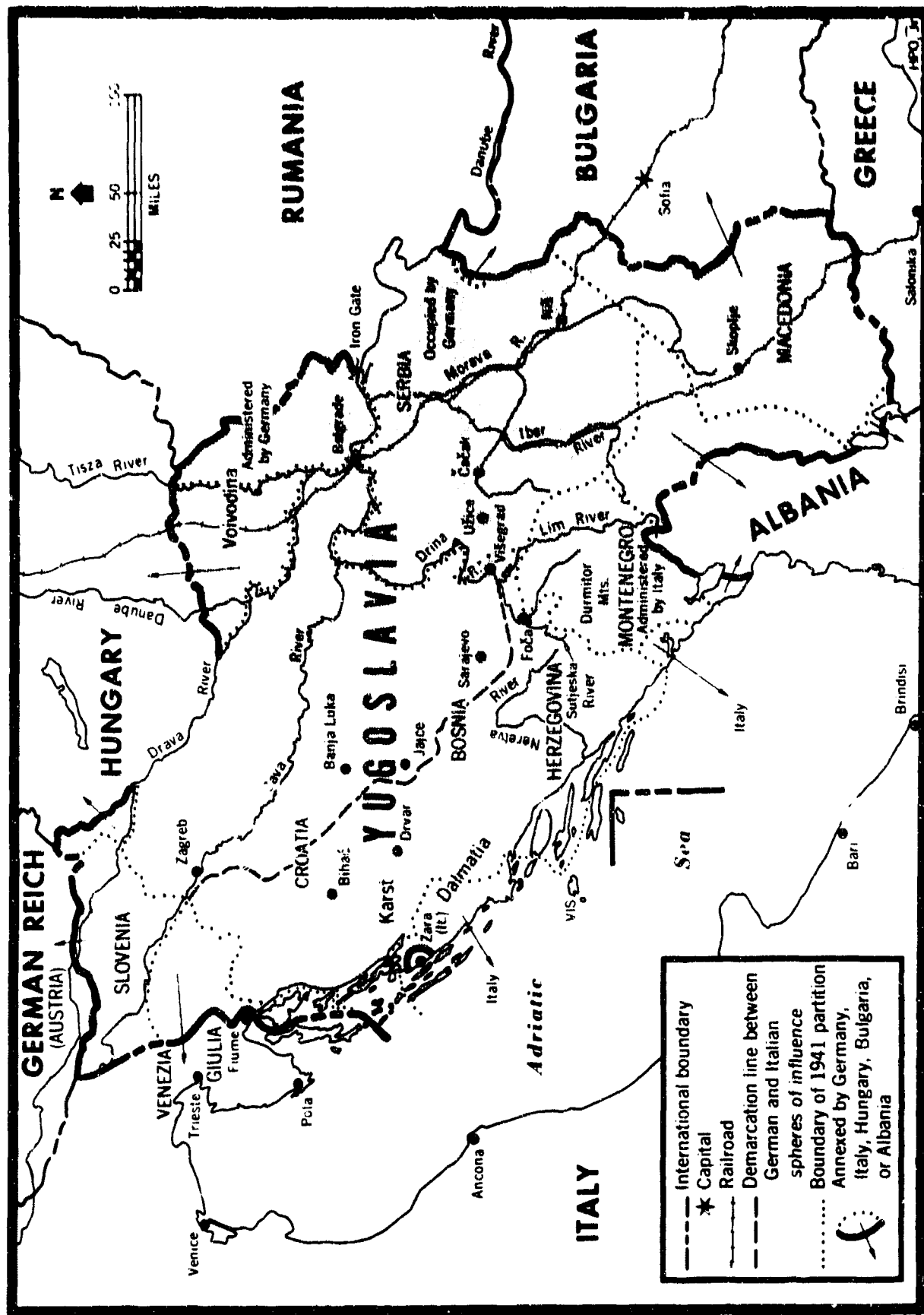
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Chapter Eleven

**YUGOSLAVIA
1941-1944**

by Earl Ziemke



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Although the insurgents of the Yugoslav resistance movement were bitterly divided between Communists and Četniks during World War II, neither the puppet governments set up in Croatia and Serbia nor the Axis occupation troops were able to destroy these threats to their own safety—despite a policy of repression seldom equalled in modern history.

BACKGROUND

Yugoslavia is the largest of the Balkan countries, covering 99,000 square miles or about the area of Wyoming. Half of the terrain is mountainous, the rest mostly rough and hilly. Only the Voivodina, a small triangle north of the Danube River between Hungary and Rumania, is a true plain. The major mountain ranges are the Dinaric Alps in the northwest and the Balkans in the southeast. The climate is typical of continental middle Europe, with relatively hot summers and cold winters. A thin strip along the Dalmatian coast has a Mediterranean climate, but the mountains prevent the warming influence of the sea from extending more than a few miles inland.

The most distinctive feature in the physical geography of Yugoslavia is the Karst, an extensive limestone region in the Dinaric Alps. Here rain water has dissolved the limestone to produce unusual land forms. Drainage is mostly subterranean. The few streams and rivers run in steep-sided gorges, often plunging underground for long stretches. Desolate plateaus and blind, saucer-shaped depressions mark the landscape. Wild, inhospitable, partly desert-like, thinly populated, with few roads—the Karst is a natural stronghold for insurgents.¹

Ethnic and Religious Diversity of the Peoples of Yugoslavia

The population of Yugoslavia, according to the last prewar census in 1931, was slightly under 14 million.² Population density is directly correlated with terrain elevation: in the Morava River valley between Belgrade and Niš there are 175 persons per square mile; on the other hand, the lower mountainous regions, with elevations of 3,500 to 4,500 feet, have only 60 to 100 persons per square mile, and the higher mountains, fewer than 40. Settlement is mainly in the river valleys.³

Some 20 ethnic groups have been identified within the Yugoslav borders. The three largest are the Serbs (41 percent), the Croats (24 percent), and the Slovenes (9 percent). These three, together with Macedonians (5 percent), Montenegrins (3 percent), Muslims not classified as belonging to any ethnic group (5 percent), and a small number of Bulgarians, comprise the group known before World War II as the Serbo-Croats. Altogether, these groups account for 87 percent of the total population.⁴

The chief religions are the Serbian Orthodox (49 percent), Roman Catholic (37 percent), and Muslim (11 percent).⁵ The religious divisions follow ethnic and geographic lines: Croats and Slovenes, living in the west, are nearly all Catholics; the Serbs, Montenegrins, and Macedonians, living in the east, are mostly Orthodox. Adherence to the Orthodox religion is considered one of the attributes of Serbian nationality—the many Muslims who live in Serbia are not considered Serbs.

The history of the South Slavs* has accentuated their ethnic and religious differences. The Croats and Slovenes—Catholic, using the Roman alphabet, and associated through much of their recent history with the Austro-Hungarian Empire—have tended to identify with the West and to regard themselves as culturally more advanced than the other ethnic groups. On the other hand, the Serbs—Orthodox and using the Cyrillic alphabet—have regarded themselves as rightfully predominant on the grounds of number and their successful fight against the Turks for national independence after half a millenium of foreign rule.⁶

The territory that became Yugoslavia in 1918-19 had, in fact, been for hundreds of years the frontier between the Slavic-Christian West and the Turkish-Muslim East. Until the mid-19th century, the country, except for Croatia and Slovenia, was under Turkish control and had suffered the effects of corruption, religious discrimination, oppression, and denial of political and personal rights. The result was to reinforce political turbulence and to impress on the area a tradition of violence in personal, ethnic, religious, and political conflicts. Justice tended to become a personal or familial responsibility and, in the blood feud, strictly a matter of vengeance. Cruelty, outlawry, and sudden death became the commonplaces of everyday life, with the mountains offering protection for political dissidents, outlaws, and insurgents.

Economic Problems of the Interwar Years

Although Yugoslavia did not lack natural resources of coal and metals, the country skirted the edge of economic disaster during the period of its independence after World War I. Its economic problems stemmed mainly from its heavy dependence on agriculture, which, according to the 1931 census, engaged 76 percent of the population. Various land reforms had reduced most peasant holdings far below the 25 acres estimated to be the minimum needed to sustain a family.

* The name "Yugoslav," also spelled Jugoslav, means South Slav.

The farm labor supply greatly exceeded the demand, and the birth rate, in the interwar years consistently the highest in Europe outside the Soviet Union, aggravated the problem. Lack of capital and fragmentation of holdings made agriculture more primitive and less productive than it had been before World War I.

The economy just before the German invasion in 1941 was marked by persistent unemployment, low wages, high prices, and heavy expenditures for armaments, nearly all of which had to be bought from foreign manufacturers. Remittances from emigrants to the United States and South America formed a substantial part of the national income.⁷ Depression and unemployment were causing rumblings of discontent even before the occupation occurred.⁸

Nazi Germany Attacks and Overcomes Yugoslavia in April 1941

Although there was political disaffection as well as economic discontent--the Serbs controlled the government and the army, with concomitant dissatisfaction on the part of the large Croat and Slovene minorities--the ultimate downfall of the Yugoslav monarchy came, not through internal weakness, but through German force. On March 25, 1941, Yugoslav ministers signed the Tripartite Pact, and by so doing linked Yugoslavia to the Axis powers of Germany, Italy, and Japan. A surge of popular protest greeted the news of the signing and two days later, on March 27, a military coup replaced the regent, Prince Paul, and his government with the young King Peter II.

The Yugoslav reaction enraged the German dictator Adolf Hitler, who was seeking freedom of movement to invade the U. S. S. R.; and he ordered the immediate destruction of Yugoslavia, stating that "the blow should be carried out with unmerciful harshness and the military destruction done in lightning-like fashion."⁹ The German invasion began on April 6, 1941, and ended in unconditional surrender 11 days later, forcing King Peter II and the royal government to flee first to Cairo, later to London. The Yugoslav army never had a chance. Some Croat forces refused to fight, and many Croats even greeted the Germans as liberators.¹⁰

The Axis Divides Yugoslav Territory

After the surrender Hitler implemented his decision "to destroy Yugoslavia as a military power and a sovereign state."¹¹ Hungary, allied with the Axis powers, was given two slices of Yugoslav territory north of the Danube and west of the Tisza. Italy was allowed to annex southern Slovenia and most of the Dalmatian coast and to occupy Montenegro and parts of Croatia and Macedonia. Montenegro became a nominally independent principality in personal union with the Italian Crown, ostensibly because the Italian queen had been a Montenegrin princess.¹² Bulgaria, another Axis ally, was given Macedonia, except for the western region, which was incorporated into Albania, then under Italian control. Germany annexed northern Slovenia, took over direct administration of the Voivodina east of the Tisza River, and occupied all of a much smaller

Serbia. Shorn of the Vojvodina, Montenegro, and Macedonia, Serbia was reduced to approximately its size before the Balkan Wars of 1912-13 and was given an ineffectual puppet government under Gen. Milan Nedić.¹³

Croatia, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, became a nominally independent kingdom under Tomislav II, the Italian Duke of Spoleto, who wisely never entered the country to claim his throne. The government of Croatia was taken over by the Poglavnik (Leader) Ante Pavelić and his Ustaši, in émigré Fascist group which had little genuine support in the country.¹⁴ The population of Croatia included a large Serbian minority, and Pavelić reportedly declared that a third of this group would have to leave the country and another third would be killed. At carrying out the latter part of the statement he was to be better than his word.¹⁵ The Germans and Italians divided Croatia into spheres of influence, the Germans moving into the northeastern half. Thus after 11 days of war, Yugoslavia was politically fragmented and subjected to military occupation by its neighbors.

INSURGENCY

In the sudden and complete Yugoslav collapse, thousands of Yugoslav soldiers found it relatively easy to avoid the inconvenience of surrendering themselves and their weapons to the Germans. Most, no doubt, wanted nothing more than to go home, but some refused to recognize the surrender as final. Indeed, the quickness of the defeat was such that the country was psychologically unconquered; the spirit of rebellion was especially widespread and spontaneous among Serbs. Eventually, two major resistance groups were formed—one Serb nationalist and one Communist. Cooperating at first against the occupiers, they were soon split by political differences.

Col. Draža Mihailović Organizes First Resistance Against the Axis Occupiers

The earliest Yugoslav *resistance* force was formed by Col. Draža Mihailović, a senior officer of the royal army. Withdrawing to the mountains of western Serbia, by mid-1941 he had organized the nucleus of an insurgent force, with headquarters at Čačak.

Mihailović had been a brilliant staff officer; but, 48 years old at the time of the invasion, he was unknown outside the army and was not popular with his fellow officers. Like de Gaulle in France,* he had been an importunate critic of national strategy and policy. He had opposed the accepted strategy of defending Yugoslavia on the borders and had argued instead for a rapid withdrawal to a mountainous redoubt in Bosnia and western Serbia. He had been arrested for openly criticizing the government's policy of appeasement of the German minority in Slovenia. In February 1941, at the height of the government effort to preserve strict neutrality, he had

* See Chapter Five, "France (1940-1945)."

attended a party given by the British Military Attaché. For that he was placed under arrest for several weeks and then assigned as chief of staff in an unimportant command on the southern Adriatic coast. When war broke out, he was made chief of staff of the Sarajevo garrison.

Mihailović's decision not to obey the surrender order was primarily another manifestation of his independent spirit. The springing up at the same time of other Serbian nationalist groups, known as Četniks, was wholly spontaneous, and in the first months the units of both Mihailović and the Četniks were for the most part out of touch with each other and with the outside world. Mihailović only began to emerge as the recognized Četnik leader in September 1941 after he succeeded in transmitting a radio message to the royal government-in-exile in London via the British naval station on Malta. A month later the British Middle East Command sent a liaison party. In January 1942 the exile government appointed Mihailović its minister of war and commander in chief of the Royal Yugoslav Army in the Fatherland. He was promoted rapidly through the ranks from colonel to army general.¹⁶

From the first, Mihailović did not regard his mission in Yugoslavia simply as resistance to the occupying power. He was at least equally intent on preserving his country from the occupiers' ravages, on seeing the monarchy restored at the end of the war, and on re-establishing Serbian political predominance within Yugoslavia. Mihailović succeeded in making himself a popular hero but failed to extend his control sufficiently to create a true national resistance movement. He was not a completely successful leader of his own organization. In a multinational state, he fought for Serbian supremacy and for an exile government of doubtful popularity.¹⁷ With a loose, 19th-century-type, peasant militia organization, he attempted to make headway against a highly organized, tightly controlled rival movement.

Yugoslav Communists Under Tito Organize Partisans Following German Attack on U.S.S.R.

The other group, which came to be known popularly as the Partisans, had its roots in the Yugoslav Communist Party, which had been outlawed in 1921, and was led by the party's Secretary General, Josip Broz, who had adopted the party name of "Tito" (The Hammer). The party's role from the German invasion of Yugoslavia to the German attack on the Soviet Union on June 22, 1941, is unclear. Some say that it remained passive; the party, however, claims to have been laying the groundwork for future activity. In any event, on July 4, the Central Committee completed plans for an insurrection and creation of partisan units.¹⁸ Tito set up headquarters in Serbia in Užice and sent lieutenants to organize the resistance in other provinces.

The prospects of a successful Communist-led resistance were not good. The Communists had a small underground organization in being; they had a cadre of Spanish Civil War veterans; and they had a party membership, by their own count, of 12,000 members and 15,000 Young Communists.¹⁹ Their greatest handicap was their communism, which possessed no attraction for their best source of potential recruits, the religious and conservative peasantry.

On the other hand, the Partisans, unlike Mihailović, were not committed to an exclusive-nationality policy. Also, since (unlike the Četniks) they were not the trustees of an established order, they stood to benefit from any trend toward increased disorder. And in Tito they had an experienced and gifted organizer.

Born in Kumrovec, Croatia, in 1892, the son of a peasant blacksmith, Tito had early gone to work in factories in Croatia and in Vienna. Drafted into the Austro-Hungarian army in World War I, he had been captured by--according to some reports, he had deserted to--the Russians. He became a Bolshevik. Escaping from a prison camp in central Asia in 1917, he made his way to St. Petersburg to join the Russian revolutionists. Three years later, after attending the Comintern Institute in Moscow, he returned to Yugoslavia.

Tito's subsequent life, until World War II, was that of a professional Comintern agent. During the early years he was a factory organizer and made frequent trips to Moscow to keep out of the hands of the Yugoslav police. In 1927 he became secretary general of the Croat branch of the Communist party. The next year he was arrested and sentenced to five years' imprisonment. After his release, he left the country and set about systematically obliterating his former identity. Under various aliases such as Babitch and Walter, he worked mostly in Vienna and Paris. Achieving almost complete personal anonymity, he was remembered later by those who knew him then only as a short, dapper man who liked good living. During the Spanish Civil War, he handled Balkan recruiting for the International Brigade, staying in Paris while the men who were to become his closest associates in the Partisan command, the so-called Spanish nobility, acquired their fighting experience in the civil war.²⁰

In 1939 Tito took over underground direction of the Yugoslav Communist Party, first from Zagreb, later from the home of a wealthy supporter in Belgrade.²¹ During the invasion and early months of occupation, he held the party strictly to the Moscow line, and the Partisans were initially organized in the pattern that the Soviet government had established for its own occupied territories. Until well into the war, Tito revealed nothing about himself other than his strange nickname. Mihailović, when he met Tito, believed he was a Russian because he spoke Serbo-Croat with an accent.²² In Cairo, as late as 1943, British Intelligence officers were uncertain "whether Tito existed at all and if so whether he was a man or a woman."²³

As Insurgent Operations Begin, Tito and Mihailović Promise Mutual Support--But Their Forces Clash

The first overt acts of insurrection recognized as such by the Germans came in the third week in July 1941 when a German general's car was attacked and an ammunition dump at Semendria was blown up.²⁴ Whether these acts were accomplished by Partisans or Četniks apparently could not be determined.

In the early period of insurgency, Tito's headquarters at Užice and Mihailović's near Čučak were only 25 miles apart; and by the fall of 1941, the two insurgent groups faced the problem of settling their relations with each other. Mihailović appeared to have the greater potential. He had the established Četnik organization, which provided a recruitment and supply system of sorts; and he had ties with the puppet government in Belgrade.²⁵ He was supported by the royal Yugoslav government-in-exile, which had appointed him minister of war and argued his case in London. Furthermore, his policies in Yugoslavia coincided, at least during the first two years, with those stated by the British in August 1941: "to prepare a widespread underground organization ready to strike hard later on, when we give the signal." Meanwhile, guerrilla operations were to be limited to those which would "cause constant embarrassment to the occupying forces, and prevent any reduction in their numbers."²⁶ After this, some supplies began trickling in, and for more than a year, in fact, the British supported only Mihailović.²⁷

The Partisans, on the other hand, were still quite weak in 1941. Tito's most likely source of aid and support, the Soviet Union, was suffering a series of crushing defeats and had more than enough troubles of its own. Lacking a support organization, he was in fact attempting to abolish the traditional village communes and to substitute people's liberation committees to be responsible for local administration, as well as for Partisan recruitment and supplies.

During September and October 1941, Mihailović and Tito met several times to seek a basis for collaboration; but the ideological gulf between Mihailović, the monarchist and Serbian nationalist, and Tito, the Communist and Croat, was unbridgeable. Tito's main object in the negotiations appears to have been to undermine Mihailović's sources of support. On October 21, he demanded that the village communes be abolished and replaced by people's liberation committees and that service in both the Četniks and Partisans be voluntary rather than obligatory. Five days later, Tito and Mihailović met once more and, without reaching any agreement in substance, promised each other general support. But on November 2, open fighting broke out between the Četniks and the Partisans. Henceforth the Yugoslav insurgency had the additional aspect of a civil war.²⁸

Forced Out of Serbia, Partisans Reorganize

Driven out of his Serbian headquarters at Užice in the late fall of 1941 by German attacks, Tito retreated first into eastern Montenegro and then into northwestern Bosnia, where Ustaši excesses had created favorable conditions for the insurgents.²⁹ In late 1941, the Partisans claimed an effective strength of 91,000;³⁰ their actual effective strength was undoubtedly very much less. In 1942 Communist insurgent activity shifted still further westward into Italian-occupied Croatia and Montenegro.

The forced movement out of Serbia produced a significant change in the Partisan organization. Until then the Partisans had intended, like the Četniks, to base their organization on the

territorial principle so that units would be formed and would operate in their local areas, from which they would also draw recruits and supplies. By early 1942, however, the Partisan command decided that it needed a force that could operate anywhere instead of being tied to a local area. Without entirely abandoning the territorial principle, it also began to form "proletarian brigades," using, at least at first, people from cities and towns without local ties, giving them a strong military organization.³¹ The Partisan reorganization and development into a mobile military-type force were greatly aided by the Italian occupation forces, which focused on establishing control of the Dalmatian coast and ignored the Croatian interior.

Italian policy also deliberately strengthened the Četniks. In a game that the Germans regarded with great misgivings, the Italians attempted to play off the Četniks against both the Partisans and—surprisingly enough—the Ustaši. By late 1942 the Italians had reportedly armed and supplied 19,000 Četniks in Croatia and were using them as a major anti-Partisan force.³²

Tito Adopts a National Front Strategy

In the matter of securing Soviet support, the Partisans—or the People's Army of Liberation, as they were then calling themselves—had little success during 1942. The Russians, still preoccupied with their own troubles and very dependent on the good will of the Western Powers, apparently urged Tito to play down communism and work toward establishing a national front. In September, to Tito's huge dismay, the Russians elevated the royal Yugoslav ministry in Moscow to the rank of an embassy.³³ Grudgingly, Tito took the hint. He created the People's Liberation Anti-Fascist Front, of which the elected representative body, the Anti-Fascist Council of the People's Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ), met in Bihać on November 26, 1942. AVNOJ, which claimed to represent all the national groups and a broad spectrum of political opinion, appointed an executive committee which assumed the functions of a government but avoided claiming actually to be a government.³⁴

As a national-front movement, the Partisans had considerable appeal. They adopted a federalist approach which avoided the old conflicts between ethnic groups and was viewed favorably even by numbers of anti-monarchist Serbs. The scarcity of Communist recruits forced them to seek and tolerate non-Communists in the rank and file. Partisan propaganda during this period carefully avoided any attack on King Peter in London.³⁵ The Partisan leadership remained under tight Communist control; but Tito, besides being an unshakable Communist, was also an exceptionally capable leader who exerted wide personal attraction.

Partisans Find Two Major Sources of Supply—the Allies and the Italians

Successful counterinsurgency operations made the first eight months of 1943 a period of deepening crises for the Partisans, except in one important respect. The exception was the

awakening of British interest, which by spring prompted London to send a small British mission under Capt. F. W. Deakin to Tito. The British were dissatisfied with Mihailović's passivity and angered by evidence of Četnik collaboration with the Italians and the Nedić puppet government of Serbia.³⁶ Tito, whatever his politics, appeared to be actively committed against the occupation powers.

In September the British sent Brig. Fitzroy MacLean, a former foreign service officer and member of Parliament, as head of a large military mission to Tito. The addition of an American, Maj. Linn ("Slim") Farish, made the mission ostensibly Allied,^{*} although it was always a British "show." At the same time, the British mission to Mihailović was strengthened.³⁷

The tide turned definitely for the Partisans on September 9, 1943, when the Italians surrendered. The Italian military collapse was sudden and complete. It opened to the Partisans not only the mountains of Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Montenegro, but the whole Dalmatian coast and offshore islands. In addition, they secured the weapons and equipment of six Italian divisions and enlisted the support of approximately two more.³⁸ In a few weeks they obtained control, if only temporarily, of the whole Yugoslav coast and a sizable part of the interior.

Partisans Create an Underground Government and Gain Increasing Allied Support

On November 29, 1943, in Jajce, the AVNOJ met for the second time and declared itself the supreme legislative and executive body of Yugoslavia and "deprived" the royal government-in-exile of the right to represent Yugoslavia "anywhere." It named the National Committee of Liberation as the future government and elected Tito as premier, at the same time creating for him the rank of Marshal of Yugoslavia.³⁹

More important for the immediate future was the upsurge in outside recognition and support. The British were considering establishing a beachhead on the Balkan peninsula, and Tito had an effective military force. Estimates of his strength by British and American observers placed it between 150,000 and 220,000 men, a substantial force in any case.⁴⁰ At the Tehran Conference in early December 1943, the British urged full recognition and support for Tito; and at Cairo, on December 5, the Combined Chiefs of Staff directed Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, Commander in Chief, Allied Forces, North Africa, to support "The Patriots in the Balkans to the greatest practicable extent."⁴¹

Četnik and Partisan Strength Compared

As Tito's fortunes rose, Mihailović's declined. To compete with the Partisans, Mihailović created an elaborate military structure with a general staff, corps, and brigades. But his 70,000 to 80,000 Četniks remained scattered and only nominally subordinate to him.⁴² The

^{*} Farish was killed in Yugoslavia. When a full-scale American mission was later sent to Tito, the MacLean mission reverted to its original status.

fall of 1943, nearly all of the Četnik detachment commanders had negotiated truces with the Germans. Mihailović denounced them as traitors, but he himself clearly regarded the Communist Partisans as the main enemy.⁴³

During the first half of 1944, the Partisans were in trouble again, though less seriously than in the previous year. By late 1943 the Germans had occupied the coast and most of the islands, and in the winter they began pressing in on the Partisans' mountain strongholds. The Partisans had 11 corps, 31 divisions, and 50 territorial detachments, but the corps numbered at most 10,000 to 15,000 men each and the divisions had the strength of regular regiments. The German estimate, in contrast to much higher Allied figures, placed Partisan strength at no more than 110,000 men.⁴⁴

Tito's Fortunes Rise—British End Aid to Mihailović and Russians Send Mission to Partisans

Whatever his military fortunes, Tito's political prospects had continued on the upswing. Early in 1944 the British decided to break with Mihailović and shift their full support to the Partisans. In January 1944 Churchill initiated a personal exchange of letters with Tito. In March the United States sent a mission to him, although, in accordance with the Tehran and Cairo discussions which had envisioned support for both insurgent movements, the United States also sent a mission to Mihailović. During this period the British mission was being withdrawn. By mid-May the British had persuaded King Peter II to dismiss his prime minister, and to appoint, under Dr. Ivan Šubašić, a government committed to achieving an agreement with Tito.⁴⁵

In late February 1944 a Soviet military mission arrived, but officially the Russians showed only lukewarm interest in Tito. Their mission, on its arrival in Italy in January, had seemed to have no more than a vague idea of what it was to do, and it was prepared to deal with both Mihailović and Tito.⁴⁶ The first sign that the Russians' interest might be greater than it appeared came in March, when Tito, apparently on their advice, attempted an offensive into Serbia. At the end of May the Germans staged a successful raid on Tito's headquarters in Drvar, almost capturing him. As the situation deteriorated, Tito was forced to ask the Allies to evacuate him and his staff, and on June 3 he was taken by air to Bari. It was possibly a coincidence that one of the few Soviet crews flying support missions for the Partisans in a lend-lease Dakota managed to be the one that evacuated Tito. Later in the month he moved with his headquarters to the Allied-held island of Vis.⁴⁷

A Summary of the Allied Effort To Aid the Yugoslav Guerrillas

By mid-1944, Tito's prestige stood so high that he could command a major Allied support effort. Between June 1941 and June 1943, total supply deliveries, mostly British, to the Partisans had amounted to no more than 6.5 tons, while the Četniks had received 23 tons. Between June 1943 and June 1944, deliveries to the Partisans rose to 3,564 tons by air and 14,050 tons

by sea; almost two-thirds of this tonnage was delivered between January and June 1944. In the fall of 1943, the Allies had taken Vis as a commando and transshipment base, and during the first half of 1944 the Allies began operating aircraft from bases at Bari and Brindisi in Italy. At Brindisi, Partisans who had been brought out for medical treatment packed the supplies, which consisted mainly of small arms, ammunition, dynamite, rations, clothing, and medical supplies, but also included gasoline, oil, jeeps, and occasionally mules.

On June 4, 1944, the Allies established the Balkan Air Force (BAF), with two offensive fighter wings, a light bomber wing, and a Special Operations Wing. Operating mostly with RAF units, although several U.S. Army Air Force elements were included, BAF had major responsibility for supporting the Partisans. The Balkan Air Terminal Service (BATS) was activated to maintain and operate the 36 landing strips used in Yugoslavia. Allied planes had begun bringing out Partisan wounded in early April and during the next 13 months they evacuated, all told, 19,000 persons. By the end of April 1945 the Balkan Air Force had flown 9,211 successful sorties out of 12,305 attempts and delivered 18,150 short tons of supplies. Eighteen aircraft had been lost. The Soviet Union furnished crews to fly six leased U.S. aircraft.⁴⁸

Final Operations Secure Tito's Control Over Yugoslavia

The late summer of 1944 brought victory into sight for Tito. In the fourth week of August, the Soviet Second and Third Ukrainian Fronts smashed German Army Group South Ukraine on the lower Dnestr. Rumania surrendered on August 23, Bulgaria on September 8. On September 6, a Soviet armored spearhead reached the Danube at the Iron Gate, 100 miles east of Belgrade.

The first week of September the Mediterranean Allied Strategic Air Force joined the Partisans in RATWEEK, a series of intensive raids on German communications lines out of Greece through Yugoslavia. Allied heavy bombers flew 1,373 sorties and dropped 3,000 tons of bombs.⁴⁹ For the first time in the war the Partisans were able to operate successfully in Serbia.

On September 21, Tito disappeared from his headquarters on Vis. He was not heard from again until he reappeared in Yugoslavia as the Partisans were moving from the west into Serbia to meet the Russians advancing on Belgrade. In Moscow in the meantime, he and Stalin apparently had agreed that the Russians would participate in the attack on Belgrade but leave the reconquest of the rest of Yugoslavia to the Partisans. When Belgrade fell on October 20, the war still had some months to go; but for Tito and the Partisans, the major effort was over.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

During the period of partition and occupation, Dr. Ante Pavelić, installed by the Germans as head of the Croatian government, was the sole indigenous political figure to attain any kind of

stature, and that entirely as the most vicious of all Axis collaborationist leaders. Born in 1889, Pavelić began his career as a Croat separatist shortly after World War I. In 1928 he had founded a secret terrorist organization, the Ustaši (rebellion); and a year later he had been forced to flee abroad, first to Bulgaria and then to Italy.

In Italy and at a center near the Yugoslav border in Hungary, he organized his followers in the Ustaši along military lines and worked at various plots and plans against the royal Yugoslav government. The assassination of Yugoslav King Alexander at Marseilles in 1934, in which Pavelić was implicated, made him to some degree a Croat national hero. But the numbers of his outright supporters remained small, and the years in exile gave his movement the appearance of a foreign conspiracy. After 1937, as a result of a warming trend in Italian-Yugoslav relations, the Italian government forced him to disband his organization. In early 1941, when it appeared that Yugoslavia would join the Tripartite Pact, the Italians demanded that he cease even the minor political activity he was then conducting in Florence.

The Nazis Use Pavelić To Create a Reign of Terror in Croatia

Pavelić's opportunity came as the result of an interview between a German Foreign Ministry representative and the Ustaši underground chief in Croatia, the former Col. Slavko Kvaternik. On the basis of that interview, Hitler decided to make use of Pavelić and the Ustaši in Croatia. Although an upwelling of separatist sentiment was to have been expected in Croatia in any case, Kvaternik's proclamation of Croatian independence on April 10, 1941, several hours before the German troops arrived may have hastened the Yugoslav collapse. Probably more important to the Germans, it gave the Nazi invasion the appearance of not being entirely naked German aggression.

Having returned to Croatia and declared himself the Poglavnik (Leader), Pavelić failed from the start to attract any genuine popular support. The Croat nationalists who had stayed at home regarded him and his fellow émigrés as interlopers. The nation at large was dismayed when it learned that he had ceded Dalmatia to Italy.

Most damaging was Pavelić's unleashing of the Ustaši in the summer of 1941 on a wave of repression and murder,⁵⁰ particularly aimed at the large Serbian minority of Croatia. As the head of a nation in anything like the normal sense, Pavelić was a disastrous failure. In their sphere, the Italians practically excluded the Pavelić regime from any share in the administration even though Pavelić had originally been an Italian protégé.⁵¹ His German advisers would gladly have seen him removed. Even Kvaternik, whom he had promoted to field marshal, became involved in a planned coup before being dismissed in 1942. The hard core of the Ustaši, fearing the consequences of a change, stayed loyal; but that Pavelić held power throughout the war must, in the end, be credited entirely to Hitler, who regarded the ruthless police state as the most suitable form of government for the German satellite countries.

In Serbia Nedić Attempts To Play an Ameliorative Role

To Serbia, the potential nucleus of a resurgent Yugoslavia, Hitler denied even the dubious comfort of a homegrown tyranny. That Milan Nedić, head of the puppet Serbian government, lasted out the war is attributable not to any support, either internal or external, but only to the utter insignificance of the administration he headed. Nedić, 59 years old at the time of the invasion, had been a famous and popular general. A hero of the Balkan Wars and World War I, he had been minister of war and the navy until November 1940, when he was removed as a result of a policy dispute in which he apparently argued for an agreement with the Axis.⁵² During the invasion he held a troop command in southern Serbia.

Nedić was Yugoslavia's Pétain. He knew when he agreed to head a government that he would be powerless, but he hoped that his personal prestige would be enough to keep the Serbs from acts that would provoke the Germans to more severe measures than they already intended. Had he wanted to, he would not have been able to conduct a coherent policy; both the Germans and his own appointees ignored him.⁵³ His officials cultivated ties with Mihailović's organization, but did it in such a manner that neither the Germans nor the Allies could determine whose interests, if any, were served thereby. Had he been allowed to, Nedić might have presented a better defense than the postwar Yugoslav government cared to hear. Unlike Pavelić, who escaped into a comfortable retirement abroad, Nedić accompanied the retreating Germans and was extradited to Yugoslavia by the Allies in September 1945. Shortly thereafter, before he could be brought to trial, he allegedly committed suicide by jumping from a window in the state prison in Belgrade.

Axis Troop Deployment, Organisation, and Strength

In German eyes Yugoslavia was, throughout World War II, both an occupied country and, together with Albania and Greece, part of a potentially active theater of operations. As a consequence, the foreign troops in the country, except the Hungarians and the Bulgarians, always performed two functions, the one territorial (occupation), the other operational. It is, therefore, not possible to state—as both the Partisan and the Allied commands were in the habit of doing during the war—that at any given time a specific number of Axis divisions were being tied down by the insurgents. The operational requirements of the theater weighed at least as heavily as the insurgency in determining the deployment of forces and, in fact, strongly influenced the response to the insurgency.

From April 1941 to September 1943 the main operational responsibility in Yugoslavia fell to the Italians, because they held the coast. The operational command was the Italian Second Army under Gens. Vittorio Ambrosio (April 1941-January 1942), Mario Roatta (January 1942-January 1943), and Lorenzo Dalmazzo (January 1943-September 8, 1943). The Second Army, for a time redesignated General Headquarters Slovenia-Dalmatia, apparently also executed the territorial functions in the Italian-occupied areas.

The German operational command during the same period (from April 1941-September 1943) was the Twelfth Army, redesignated Army Group E in January 1943. The commanding generals—who, until a reorganization of German forces in the Balkans in the fall of 1943, were also the Armed Forces (Wehrmacht) Commanders, Southeast—were Field Marshal Wilhelm List (April-October 1941), Gen. Walter Kuntze (October 1941-August 1942), and Gen. Alexander Loehr (from August 1942). The German Twelfth Army and Army Group E headquarters were located in Salonika and were mainly concerned with the defense of Greece and the Aegean islands.

Territorial responsibility in Yugoslavia, so far as the Germans exercised it, was in the hands of the Military Commander, Serbia, who was for the greater part of the period (November 1941-August 1943) Gen. Paul Bader. The Military Commander, Serbia, was subordinate to the Armed Forces Commander, Southeast (who was in the Armed Forces High Command channel) but received his directives through the Army High Command. In Croatia, the German Plenipotentiary General, Gen. Edmund von Glaise-Horstenau (May 1941-August 1944), exercised primarily advisory and liaison functions.⁵⁴

The strengths of the Axis forces in Yugoslavia up to the Italian surrender in September 1943 can be estimated only roughly. The Germans apparently had in the neighborhood of 100,000 men, fewer in 1941, more in 1942 and after; the Italians, about 200,000; the Bulgarians, less than 100,000. The highest annual strengths in divisions⁵⁵ were as follows:

	<u>1941</u>	<u>1942</u>	<u>To September 1943</u>
German	4	7	11
Italian	18	22	19
Bulgarian	<u>2</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>8</u>
	24	35	38

Some Yugoslav Forces Also Serve the Axis

Indigenous military forces supporting the occupation powers varied widely in strength and effectiveness, and they were slow in coming into being. The most effective were the 369th, 373d, and 392d Infantry Divisions, which were formed of Croatian recruits with Volksdeutsche (ethnic German) officers and trained in Germany as part of the German army. Less satisfactory was the SS-recruited 13th SS "Handschar" Division of Balkan Muslims. None of the four divisions was specifically intended or trained for counterinsurgency operations, and none was in action before the spring of 1943.⁵⁶

The largest of the indigenous forces was the Croatian army. It was composed of the regular army—a drafted militia of very low quality—and the "elite" Ustaši units. Together the two reached a peak strength of about 150,000 in 1943. The Ustaši units, originally the Poglavnik's bodyguard, eventually expanded to form one division and fifteen weak brigades. They were the

chief instrument for the liquidation of the Serbian minority in Croatia, and of all the counterinsurgency forces they were by far the most ruthless.

Because German policy aimed at preventing a resurgence of Serbian nationalism, the Serbian forces remained weak, fragmented, and ineffective. The only armed forces the Nedić government controlled were the Serbian National Guard, which had an authorized strength of 15,000 (never attained), and some Četnik detachments not affiliated with Mihailović. In Serbia the Germans formed, under army command, the Serbian Volunteer Corps (9,000 men in 1943) and, under the SS and Police Commander in Serbia, ten auxiliary police battalions. The most effective of the German-controlled units in Serbia was the so-called Russian Serbia Corps, five under-strength regiments recruited from survivors of the White Russian Wrangel Army who had emigrated to Yugoslavia after the Russian Civil War and of Russian refugees from Rumanian-occupied Bessarabia.⁵⁷

Initial Nazi Policy Is Terrorisation

In their first reaction to the insurgency, the Germans resorted to their by-then standard initial approach of punitive deterrence, or Abschreckung. On September 16, 1941, the Armed Forces High Command ordered the execution of hostages at the rate of 50 to 100 for each German soldier killed, the executions to be accomplished in such a manner as to "increase the deterrent effect."⁵⁸

The executions were in fact carried out on approximately the prescribed scale—20,140 hostages were shot between September 1, 1941, and February 12, 1942—and they did partially achieve the desired deterrent effect. Mihailović, whose overriding interest was in preserving Serbian hegemony in a restored Yugoslavia, became more cautious in his operations, in order to forestall a blood bath that could decimate the Serbs.⁵⁹

Germans Drive Partisans Out of Serbia

The Partisans, too, were vulnerable. Although they had started early to establish a broad base similar to that of the Četniks, it is doubtful whether in 1941 they had any significant strength outside their core area. In November 1941, the Germans, employing one full division and elements of three others, combed the mountains and closed in on the Partisan centers of Užice and Čačak. At the end of the month the Partisans broke up and retreated piecemeal into eastern Bosnia. By their own reckoning they suffered heavily in that operation, which the Yugoslavs later designated as the "first enemy offensive" (of seven). Out of a 20,000-man force their casualties amounted to 4,180 killed, 3,800 missing, and 6,700 wounded.⁶⁰ Politically and strategically, the defeat was equally serious. The Partisans had lost their foothold in Serbia, which with Belgrade was the key to political control of Yugoslavia. For the next three years, the return to Serbia would be the Partisans' ultimate and, much of the time, remote goal.

The German success, however, was less than complete, and its shortcomings established the pattern that assured the Partisans' survival and eventual victory. The anti-Partisan operation showed that in the mountains it was all but impossible to draw an encirclement tight enough to prevent the escape of every guerrilla. Add to that a primitive communications network that prevented rapid troop movements, insufficient troops, and a division of responsibility between two occupying powers—and full suppression of the insurgency became a will-o'-the-wisp pursuit. Tito drew the proper conclusions and began organizing accordingly.⁶¹

Axis Offensives of 1942 Drive Partisans Into Favorable Territory

The official Yugoslav division of Counterinsurgency operations into seven offensives provides a useful framework within which to describe an otherwise largely incomprehensible series of events; it is, however, a framework invented and imposed on the events after they had occurred. The "second offensive" is an example. The Germans planned it, apparently, as a small operation by three German regiments and several Croat battalions, with the modest objective of clearing the Partisans out of the mountains between Sarajevo and Višegrad after their retreat from Serbia. Conducted between January 5 and February 5, 1942, in deep snow and bitter cold, it caught the Partisans in a moment of weakness and, consequently, dealt them an unexpectedly severe blow. Their losses, according to the Yugoslav figures, were 2,750 killed, 1,120 missing, and 5,800 wounded, out of possibly not much more than 10,000 men.* Tito, his headquarters staff, and the survivors of this second German offensive escaped south to Foča on the border of Bosnia and Montenegro.⁶² The Partisans were badly weakened, but fortune worked toward their survival. In withdrawing south past Sarajevo, they had crossed into the Italian occupation zone, and the Italians were much less inclined toward strenuous counterinsurgency operations than the Germans.

In the "third offensive," the Partisans lumped together all the counterinsurgency actions against them between March and September 1942. Actually, the counterinsurgency forces undertook only one significant operation during that time. In the spring the Military Commander, Serbia, enlisted the Italians' reluctant assistance in an operation against the Partisan center at Foča. With three German divisions, three highly unenthusiastic Italian divisions, and a collection of Četnik detachments in the Italian service, the attack began on April 20. The Germans moved out from the north, the Italians closed in on the east and west, and the Četniks

* Although it is difficult to appreciate why a military force should want to inflate its own losses, the Partisan figure, as given in postwar Yugoslav publications, consistently seems high. One reason might be, since exact-strength figures are seldom given, to give the impression that the force engaged was larger than in fact it was. In general, the losses in killed and missing correspond to the German estimates. The greatest apparent discrepancy is in the numbers of wounded. The total figures of 399,880 wounded and 31,200 dead of wounds, for instance, would, if correct, give the Partisans a better recovery rate than most regular armies with full medical establishments.

completed the ring on the south. In the wild mountains around the headwaters of the Drina a tight encirclement would have been impossible to maintain even if the Italians had been more determined. By mid-June the Partisans had broken out and begun to retreat north.⁶³

The Partisans' march north took them deep into the Italian sphere of interest in Croatia. Again Tito had made a fortunate choice. The area was one which had experienced the depredations of the Ustaši. The Croat army and the Četniks were not strong enough to put up serious opposition, and the Italians were willing to tolerate anything that would weaken the Croat puppet government. During the summer the Partisans moved north and west through the mountains. In the communities along the route of march, which also were the chief sources of Partisan supplies, numbers of men volunteered or were drafted. In Croatia the Ustaši reign of terror drove in more volunteers. Early in November, having covered 180 miles, the Partisans stopped at Bihać in northern Bosnia.⁶⁴

Germans Almost Smash Partisans and Četniks in Two Major Operations of 1943

By fall 1942, the Germans had begun to worry about possible Allied landings on the Yugoslav coast. They believed that in such an event the Četniks and the Partisans would abandon their own quarrels and turn completely against the occupation powers. In October the Germans began to plan and negotiate with the Italians for Operation WEISS (White) to smash the Partisans in the Bihać area and for Operation SCHWARZ (Black) against the concentration of Četnik detachments in Montenegro.

The Partisans' turn came first. Operation WEISS—the "fourth offensive"—began on January 20, 1943, with Germans, Italians, Croats, and Četniks advancing to encircle the Bihać center. While a mobile German unit drove straight through from northwest to southeast, the rest closed in from the sides. On January 24, the Germans took Bihać, but the Italians had failed to close the circle on the south, and the Partisans escaped through the gap. In the second half of February the Germans and Italians pursued the Partisans as they headed south toward Montenegro, a march made difficult by the winter weather. Pursuing German and Italian forces drove Tito to make crossings of the Neretva and Drina Rivers against Četnik and Italian blocking detachments. In Montenegro, they pushed Tito south past his former center at Foča to the Durmitor Mountains, where he arrived greatly hampered by many wounded and an outbreak of typhus. Tito's luck appeared to be running out. Sick and near starvation, his men, then numbering about 20,000 in the Durmitor, needed a long rest, but their retreat had taken them into exactly the area in which the Germans had planned their offensive against the Četniks.

With heavy reinforcements of 40,000 Italian troops and 10,000 Bulgarian and quisling Croat formations added to their own augmented strength of 50,000, the Germans began Operation SCHWARZ—the "fifth offensive"—on May 15. The Partisans in the area had no choice but to break out and get on the move again. Their first intention, to break out to the southeast into

Albania, proved unfeasible. At the end of May, two attempts, one to cross the Drina and another to cross the Šutjeska, failed. Finally, between June 5 and 9 they forced a crossing of the Šutjeska and began a retreat north into eastern Bosnia.⁶⁵

The Germans claimed to have killed 5,600 Četniks in SCHWARZ.⁶⁶ In the summer the Germans, in a raid on Čačak, captured part of Mihailović's headquarters staff; and police raids throughout Serbia, reaching even into the puppet government, threatened the Četnik organization.⁶⁷ Individual Četnik leaders began truce negotiations with the Germans. Thus mid-summer 1943 was a time of crisis for the Četniks as well as the Partisans.

Italian Surrender Creates Crisis for German Organisation and Operation

Suddenly, in September 1943, the German situation in Yugoslavia changed completely. The Italian capitulation at that time forced the Germans to assume operational responsibility for the coastal defense and territorial responsibility for the former Italian occupation areas. On the coast and in the whole former Italian occupation zone, the Partisans, having fallen heir to substantial stocks of Italian weapons and equipment, were there ahead of them.

To cope with the Germans' vastly increased military and administrative responsibilities, Hitler appointed Field Marshal Maximilian Freiherr von Weichs as Commander in Chief of the Southeast Theater and at the same time made him his own subordinate by naming him also Commanding General, Army Group F, with operational command in Yugoslavia and Albania. To oversee the coastal defenses on the Adriatic, von Weichs was given the Headquarters, Second Panzer Army, under Gen. Lothar Rendulic. Below the theater command but not directly subordinate to it, the Wehrmacht appointed Gen. Hans Felber, Military Commander, Southeast, giving him territorial command in Serbia, Croatia, and Montenegro.⁶⁸ For the first time, Hitler also undertook to approach the Balkan problem politically, appointing Ambassador Hermann Neubacher as Special Plenipotentiary of the Foreign Ministry in Serbia, Montenegro, and Greece.⁶⁹

For the Germans the first essential was to restore the seaward defenses. That they did, if not with ease at least with notable dispatch, considering the Partisans' initial advantage and their own relative weakness. Army Group F had about 300,000 troops, less than half of them German and of those a good part neither fully trained nor equipped for combat.⁷⁰ By November 1943, in a series of offensive moves which the Partisan Yugoslavs have lumped together as the first phase of the "sixth offensive," the Second Panzer Army succeeded in occupying the coast and the islands except Vis, which was occupied by several battalions of British Commandos and which, lying as far offshore as it did, would have required a full-scale amphibious assault.

Some Germans Recognize Problems Inherent in Policy of Terrorism

German agencies in Yugoslavia also proposed, in the fall of 1943, several palliative measures, but all encountered Hitler's opposition and therefore were not tried. As early as December 1942 the Army Group E chief of staff (later Army Group F chief of staff) had argued that the Partisans should be recognized as legal belligerents, in the hope, first, that they might then operate according to the rules of land warfare and so remove some of the terror of the guerrilla war and, second, that the German troops fighting the guerrillas "would be esteemed higher in our own OKW . . . with respect to decorations and assignments mentioned in OKW reports, etc. . . ."71 Ambassador Neubacher proposed to strengthen Serbia by returning Montenegro to it and giving the puppet government more power. He hoped in that way to create an indigenous counterweight to the Partisans and to the vicious but ineffectual Ustaši government in Croatia. Neubacher and the Armed Forces Operations Staff also urged an attempt to get a full-fledged truce with the Četniks by negotiations with Mihailović.72

Only two new approaches were given trials, and both were so limited in scope that they had no practical effect. By personal intervention in specific cases Neubacher managed to reduce somewhat the shooting of hostages.73 And in the late fall he secured the release of the captured Četnik leader "Pope" Djurišić and secured permission for him to organize a small anti-Partisan unit that later fought effectively in Montenegro.74

Germans Hold Partisans Out of Serbia

Intelligence against both the Partisans and Četniks was not difficult, because both Tito and Mihailović had to depend heavily on radio in exercising command, and the Germans had reduced breaking their codes to a routine. In October and November 1943, the Germans observed a movement of strong Partisan units westward into eastern Bosnia. The Partisans marched by day and hid off the roads at night. Radio intelligence, confirmed by a captured order, revealed that Tito was preparing an offensive into Serbia. By early December Tito had assembled his II and III Corps, which the Germans estimated to number 30,000 men, east of Sarajevo and south of Višegrad.

Knowing where the Partisans would be, General Rendulic was able, by an ostensibly random series of troop movements, to set a trap. In three operations—KUGELBLITZ (Ball Lightning), SCHNEE-STURM (Snow Storm), and WALDRAUSCH (Forest Rustle)—running from early December 1943 to late January 1944, the Germans put a disastrous end to the Partisans' first attempt to break into Serbia. The Germans placed Partisan losses in December and January at over 27,000.75

In March 1944, Tito staged a second attempt to break into Serbia.* The time was well chosen. Nearly all of the German troops that normally conducted counterinsurgency operations had been withdrawn for the occupation of Hungary. All the Military Commander, Southeast, had left were some Bulgarian occupation troops, Serbian detachments, and a detachment of the Brandenburg Division. The latter were German special forces troops, mostly Volksdeutsche who had lived in the country in which they were to operate and had been trained to fight as regulars or in Tarnung (i.e., in enemy uniform) as sabotage and covert reconnaissance units. The "division" existed only as a cover name. By mid-March Tito had deployed an estimated 17,000 Partisans south of Vilegrad. On March 21 they crossed the Lim River into Serbia. A week later they reached the Studenica and Reka Rivers and on March 31 they broke a line the Military Commander, Southeast, had established in the Ibar valley. In the meantime, von Weichs had ordered some of the forces back from Hungary. But by the time the Partisans reached the Ibar it was clear that their offensive had run out of momentum. They did not have the command capacity for lengthy offensive operations, and, forced as they were to live off the land, they had constantly to spread out in all directions. By April 2, the Military Commander, Southeast, was able to begin the counterattack without waiting for the troops from Hungary.⁷⁶

Germans Use New Shock Tactics in Attempts To Destroy Partisans

In the spring of 1944, the Germans changed their tactics. Instead of the conventional encirclements, which required more troops than they could spare, they decided to form shock detachments, which would drive into the Partisan centers from all directions, split them apart, and then attempt to run down or wear out the survivors. The new tactics were tried for the first time in late April in Operation MAIBAUM (Maypole) against Tito's force retreating from Serbia. The operation fell short of the desired success, but it apparently forced Tito, who at first seemed intent on staying close to the Serbian border, to change his mind and withdraw his main force into northwestern Bosnia.

The new tactics were used again a month later in Operation ROESSELSPRUNG (Knight's Move) against the Partisans in the whole area between Bihać and Banja Luka. The intention was to drive into insurgent territory along all the roads, take the airstrips and fixed supply dumps, smash the command apparatus, split the Partisans into small groups, hunt them down, and wear them out or destroy them. An added feature was an attempt to capture Tito and his staff by dropping an SS parachute battalion on his headquarters at Drvar. The deployment was kept under elaborate and tight security.

The operation began on May 25, 1944, with the parachute drop on Drvar. Although Tito, his headquarters staff, and the Allied and Soviet missions escaped, the operation was a substantial

*According to the Germans, there is evidence that the Russians had a hand in planning this.

success. Tito had to ask the Allies to evacuate him and his staff by air. When Partisan radio traffic declined by half, the Germans correctly deduced that Tito's command system had been badly damaged. Tito announced losses of 29,450 dead, 1,800 missing, and 38,600 wounded in this "seventh offensive," which included both MAIBAU and ROESSELSPRUNG. In the raid on Drvar, the Germans counted 20 British and Americans dead. German losses were also high, though probably not so high as the 48,960 killed and 7,840 captured that the Partisans claimed. The Germans were bothered particularly by the strong Allied air support for the Partisans. For the period of ROESSELSPRUNG (May-June 1944) they completely lost control of the air over Croatia, and their own air movements had to be made at night.⁷⁷

With Troops Withdrawn To Parry Russians, Germans Manage To Hold and Then Retreat

By late July, the Germans found that the Partisans had recovered and were deploying for still another attempt to break into Serbia. Tito's III Corps was assembled in eastern Bosnia and his I and II Corps were deployed near the Montenegrin-Albanian border. The Germans intended to hold the north group and planned Operation RUEBEZAH (Mountain Sprite) against the stronger southern group. Before it could be organized, the Partisans attacked. On August 4, the Partisans' I and II Corps crossed the Lim River and the next day they reached the Ibar valley. RUEBEZAH began on the 12th and in a few days the Partisans were driven back across the Lim. In the fourth week of August, however, Soviet forces broke through the German Eastern Front and Rumania surrendered. Three German divisions, including the crack 1st Mountain Division, had to be taken out to build a front against the Russians. On August 30, RUEBEZAH had to be stopped for lack of forces. The Partisans had again been driven out of Serbia, but at the end of the month the German commander was forced to evacuate Drvar, Jajce, and several towns in Bosnia taken during the spring and summer.⁷⁸ RUEBEZAH was the last concerted counterinsurgency operation the Germans conducted in Yugoslavia.

In early September 1944, the Germans managed again to keep Tito from gaining a firm foothold in Serbia during Operation RATWEEK. But the Russians were closing in on Belgrade from the east and, by the end of the month, the Partisans were in position in advance on the capital from the west.⁷⁹ On October 20, 1944, Belgrade fell to Russian and Partisan forces, and the Germans withdrew from southern Yugoslavia. Although Partisans continued to operate behind German lines, the period of insurgency was at an end. In the capital, Tito met with representatives of the government-in-exile and signed with Dr. Šubašić an agreement concerning formation of a regency council preliminary to creating a new government. Meanwhile, the Russians turned over to Tito the Yugoslav front—a fortunate circumstance for the Second Panzer Army, since the uncertain performance of the Partisans-turned-regulars enabled the Germans to stage a phased withdrawal to the Drina after the defeat at Belgrade.⁸⁰

German Casualties as Compared With Yugoslav

The losses of the insurgent and counterinsurgent forces are difficult to calculate. The postwar Yugoslav government listed total Partisan and Yugoslav losses to May 1945 as 245,549 persons dead, 390,880 wounded, 31,200 died of wounds, and 28,923 missing. They lumped all "enemy" casualties together and claimed 447,000 killed and 559,434 captured (including 150,000 Army Group F troops taken prisoner after May 1945). They set the total losses inflicted on the enemy in the seven offensives alone at 132,000 killed and 25,625 captured.⁸¹ The only German casualty figures available, not including indigenous and other foreign troops, give for the entire southeastern theater, from April 1941 to November 30, 1944, the totals of 24,267 dead and 13,060 wounded and missing.⁸²

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

After Belgrade was taken, Tito and the Partisans were in unchallenged control of liberated Yugoslavia. The Germans were primarily concerned with getting Army Group E out of Greece and Albania. As those troops came north, they raised the German strength in Croatia, but by then the southeastern theater was completely on the defensive. Mihailović, his forces shattered, had withdrawn into the Bosnian mountains. Tito was in the capital, and he had a political, military, and administrative organization capable of taking over the key positions in the government. With the war still on, a policy of tight state control in the Communist style was easy to justify. The introduction of conscription gave him a hold on the country's manpower; and, in any case, he had the armed strength to enforce his decisions. Moreover, his assumption of power was not merely a military coup: he enjoyed substantial genuine popular support; whatever internal opposition may have existed was totally disarmed and helpless. The Germans, although they still held nearly half of the country, hardly counted; and Tito had the favor and support of both the Western Powers and the Soviet Union. The Soviet armies across the Danube in Hungary were less than a day's march away.⁸³

After the takeover, Tito's popularity continued to rise. Appreciating the strength of monarchist sentiment in Serbia, he abolished the clenched-fist salute in the armed forces and by various other means short of substantive concessions continued to cultivate an image of himself as flexible enough politically to be able to cooperate with the monarchists.* To the Četniks and collaborator troops he offered an amnesty and an opportunity to "redeem" themselves by service in the National Army of Liberation. The Germans contributed to the success of the amnesty by allowing Pavelić to launch another wave of repression against the Serbs in Croatia.

*With Tito's forces ascendant, Mihailović, abandoned even by the exile government, went into hiding. On March 13, 1946, he was apprehended and subsequently tried for treason. On July 17, he died in Belgrade before a Communist firing squad.

Hitler believed he had to give the Poglavnik a free hand in order to keep him as an ally. In the reaction, Četniks and Croat soldiers began to desert to the Tito forces in large numbers.⁸⁴

Tito Moves To Achieve His Political Objectives

On the larger political questions affecting the settlement, Tito quickly showed himself much less accommodating. In a June 1944 meeting with Dr. Šubašić, Tito had agreed in secret to recognize the royal government and had in return been appointed Supreme Commander of the Yugoslav Armed Forces. On August 21, 1944, he and Šubašić had issued declarations of mutual amity and tolerance.⁸⁵ Meeting with Šubašić again in late October, this time in Moscow, Tito showed that he was determined to have by far the better of the bargain. He demanded an overwhelming majority of the posts in the new government for the Communists, a Regency Council to represent the King pending complete liberation of the country, and a plebiscite to determine the final form of government. The King, meanwhile, was not to set foot in the country. Šubašić had no choice but to agree.⁸⁶

The Western Powers became aware of a pronounced change in Tito's attitude after he became established in Belgrade. In November, British field artillerymen operating guns for the Partisans were suddenly ordered out of the country with the curt explanation that no agreement—"such as has been signed between Yugoslav and U.S.S.R. forces"—existed to permit American or British troops on Yugoslav soil. The hint was broad and clear: Tito would not tolerate Allied ground operations on any scale in the Balkans.⁸⁷ On the other hand, the Partisans still needed and received Allied supplies and air support. From October 1944 to the end of the war Allied aircraft continued flying supply and support missions for the Partisans out of Italy.⁸⁸

As the months passed, Tito displayed no inclination to put into effect his agreement with Šubašić. Finally, in February 1945, the Great Powers—meeting at Yalta, where Churchill and Stalin agreed to share influence in Yugoslavia "50/50"—sharply urged Tito and Šubašić to get on with the business of forming a government.⁸⁹ On March 7, the Regency Council and interim government were formed. Tito became the Minister President and Šubašić, Foreign Minister. Of 28 ministries, the Communists held 20, members of the former exile government held 3, and representatives of other parties held 5.⁹⁰

On March 20, 1945, with Allied equipment and supplies shipped in through Dalmatian ports, the Partisans began their final offensive against the Germans. The attack was aimed northwest from the vicinity of Bihać toward Venezia Giulia, the district around Trieste that had been in dispute between Yugoslavia and Italy since World War I. Across the Adriatic, the Allied armies began advancing through Italy on April 1. Territorial acquisitions were contrary to Allied policy, and Tito had agreed in February that operations in Venezia Giulia would come under the Allied Supreme Commander. On May 1 and 2, the Partisans occupied Venezia Giulia and Trieste just a step ahead of the Allies. In June Tito agreed to evacuate Trieste and Pola but retained the military government of the rest of the province.⁹¹

The Postwar Government of Yugoslavia Is Communist

After the German surrender, Tito set about adjusting the political settlement in Yugoslavia to his own taste. On August 7, at the third meeting of the Anti-Fascist Council of the People's Liberation, the AVNOJ became the People's Provisional Assembly and assumed the task of preparing elections for a constituent assembly. The People's Provisional Assembly included among its 211 members of minority of "undiscredited" members of the last prewar parliament. The elections were held on November 11 and on the 29th the Constituent Assembly met and proclaimed the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia.⁸² By the turn of the year Šubašić and the other "bourgeois" representatives had been forced out of the government. The constitution ratified on January 31, 1946, committed the country to a Communist dictatorship in the Soviet style.⁸³

The settlement proved viable. The dislocation and suffering caused by the guerrilla warfare had created conditions conducive to communism. Tito was not only a doctrinaire Communist but a capable national leader, and the country was so situated geographically that it could turn either to the East or to the West. One of the new government's greatest accomplishments was the apparent solution of the nationalities problem by adoption of the federal principle. Furthermore, Tito was able to begin immediately with the rebuilding of the country. The war had been tremendously costly in both human and economic terms: civilian casualties amounted to nearly 11 percent of the population, roads and railroads were almost completely destroyed, and agriculture and manufacturing suffered heavily. But the population loss was at least economically endurable in a country that suffered from a chronic oversupply of labor; and the spirit of optimism and national purpose that prevailed immediately after the war, plus substantial foreign aid via the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency, were sufficient to accomplish the most essential reconstruction in about two years.⁸⁴

Yugoslavia's most serious postwar liabilities were the inherent weaknesses of Marxist economic theory when put into practice and the Stalinist drive in the late 1940's to subjugate the country politically and economically to the Soviet Union. In the two years after it was summarily read out of the Cominform in 1948, the Yugoslav regime successfully withstood the greatest threat to its existence by finding economic and political support in the West. In the 1950's the government's partial abandonment of rigid centralized planning achieved some improvements in industry and agriculture. Vulnerabilities still continue to exist, however, in the economy, particularly in agriculture, which has not made significant progress beyond the low state of the 1930's, and in the cohesion of the system itself. As the cases of Milovan Djilas and Vladimir Dedijer, dedicated wartime Partisans who later criticized the government openly, seem to indicate, there may be a lack of political unity within even the inner circle of old-time Communists.

The Counterinsurgency Campaign in Review

Militarily and politically, the Yugoslav Partisans were the most successful of the World War II resistance movements. They evaded destruction by the occupation forces, contributed to the German defeat, and outmaneuvered and outfought their indigenous rivals and opponents. Their principal asset was a capable, flexible, and aggressive leadership. They had the advantage of nearly ideal conditions for a successful insurgency: rugged terrain, a population inured to hardship and willing to accept guerrilla activity as an almost normal pursuit, indigenous opposition that was both unpopular and inept, and occupation forces that for various reasons could not carry out a thoroughgoing campaign of repression but at the same time were unwilling to adopt other, more conciliatory counterinsurgency methods. Moreover, the Partisans were affiliated with the winning side in the war and enjoyed the support of both the Western Allies and the Soviet Union—and they were favored by a large measure of luck.

The Yugoslav experience illustrates three major difficulties of organizing a successful counterinsurgency campaign: the cost, the tactical problems, and the persistence of outside influences on the outcome. It seems likely that, had the Germans been willing to pay the price in terms of troops and materiel, they could have eliminated the insurgency at any time before the summer of 1944. But in doing so they would not have gained a proportionate advantage in terms of their total situation, and the strength they would have needed to employ against the insurgents could always have been employed to better purpose elsewhere. Consequently, the counterinsurgency operations had to be conducted within the limits of a tactical duel in which neither side could secure decisive superiority.

The Germans developed two tactical forms: the encirclement with convergence, which required relatively large forces and a degree of precision difficult to achieve in rough terrain; and the direct thrust, which required surprise, speed, and accurate intelligence. Both were effective, but both fell short of full effectiveness against a determined and skillful opponent. In isolation the insurgency might have ultimately withered and died as the result of the military operations against it, but with the other forces that came increasingly into play, survival alone became for the insurgents the guarantee of eventual success. By political repression the Germans themselves nourished the insurgency. More important, the moral and physical support the Partisans drew from outside the country—the expectation that Germany would lose the war and the political and military assistance from the Allies—tied the success of the insurgency to the result of the whole war and reduced the counterinsurgency operations, so far as any permanent effect was concerned, to exercises in futility.

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⁸¹Vojno-Istorijski Institut, The War Effort, pp. 30, 34.

⁸²HPA Nr. 390/45, Verluste des Heeres an Toten und Vermissten in der Zeit von 1. 9. 39-30. 11. 44. (File No. H3/207, in Captured German Records Collection, World War II Records Branch, National Archives.)

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⁸⁴Schramm (ed.), Kriegstagebuch, IV, 702ff., 755.

⁸⁵Ehrman, Grand Strategy, V, 388.

⁸⁶The Liberation Struggle, p. 57; Ehrman, Grand Strategy, VI, 55.

⁸⁷Ehrman, Grand Strategy, VI, 54.

⁸⁸Craven and Cate, Europe, p. 512.

⁸⁹Ehrman, Grand Strategy, VI, p. 105; Markert, Osteuropa, p. 323.

⁹⁰Grujić (ed.), The Liberation Struggle, p. 59; Muriel Heppell and F. B. Singleton, Yugoslavia (London: Ernest Benn, 1961), p. 59; Markert, Osteuropa, pp. 122-24.

⁹¹Historical Atlas; Ehrman, Grand Strategy, VI, 128-30; Markert, Osteuropa, p. 323.

⁹²Grujić (ed.), The Liberation Struggle, p. 63.

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⁹⁴Ibid., pp. 186, 191-97.

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Part Three
POSTWAR COUNTERINSURGENT
DRAWS OR DEFEATS

CYPRUS (1954-1958)

IRAQ (1961-1964)

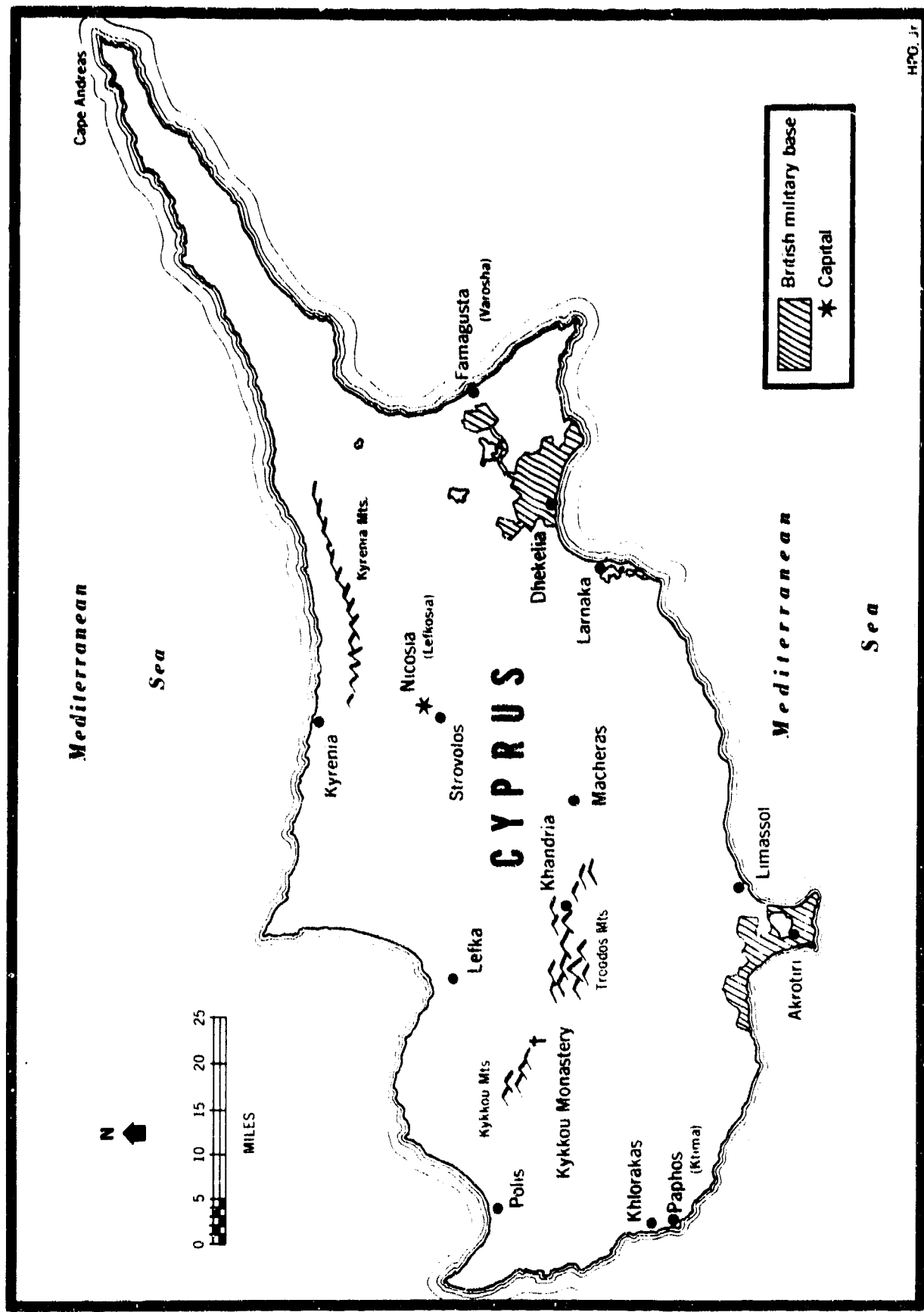
ISRAEL (1945-1948)

LEBANON (1958)

Chapter Twelve

**CYPRUS
1954-1958**

by Charilaos G. Lagoudakis



HPO, Jr

CYPRUS (1954-1958)

Chapter Twelve
CYPRUS (1954-1958)

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When Greek Cypriots, backed by Greece, demanded union with Greece—and Turkish Cypriots, backed by Turkey, refused such a settlement—Great Britain simultaneously fought the colony's Greek Cypriot irregulars and sought a political solution that would both end the conflict and save the military bases critical to British interests and commitments.

BACKGROUND

Cyprus is an island whose immediate history has been predicated upon its geographic location in the eastern Mediterranean and its utility to Great Britain as a strategic base. It lies 40 miles south of the Turkish coast, 60 miles west of Syria, 240 miles north of Egypt, and 150 miles from the nearest Greek island of the Dodecanese group off the coast of Asia Minor. Covering an area of 3,572 square miles, Cyprus is larger than Delaware and smaller than Connecticut. From late 1954 to the end of 1958, it was the scene of continuing insurgent activity by its predominantly Greek population.

Much of Cyprus is covered with low mountains. The Kyrenia range, which borders the narrow northern coastal plain, is too easily accessible to sustain safe guerrilla activity. South of the Kyrenia lies the fertile plain of Messaoria which leads to the lofty and extensive Troodos massif, with its deep valleys and broad tracts of thick forests. The Troodos range, where the guerrillas were concentrated, covers an area 50 miles long and 15 miles wide. Troodos has commanding approaches and peaks, plentiful water, unscalable rocks, hidden caves, and complicated ridges. Linked to the guerrillas' hideout on Mount Troodos was an underground resistance structure located in the urban centers and operating through a chain of Greek villages loyal to the insurgency.¹

The Population of Cyprus: Its Ethnic Background and Geographic Distribution

By the end of 1954, the population of Cyprus was 517,000, with a density of 145 persons per square mile. It was increasing at the relatively high rate of 1.66 percent annually. Greeks

constituted about 80 percent of the population; another 18 percent were Turks; and the remaining 2 percent included British, Armenians, and Lebanese.²

The ethnic character of the Cypriots had a direct bearing on the outbreak of insurgency. As members of the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Greek Cypriots, together with the rest of the Greeks in the Aegean area, had begun a struggle for independence against Turkish Muslim rule in 1821. Cyprus, like Crete and other large Aegean islands, however, was left out of the new Greek state created in 1830. Greek sentiment for independence therefore continued in these islands, with the aim of union (enosis) with Greece.

The size and location of the urban population, which provided the leadership and most of the resources for the insurgency, are of special significance. About 25 percent of the Cypriots live in six scattered urban centers: From the inland capital of Nicosia (Lefkosia), the roads lead to the ports of Famagusta (Varosha) on the east coast, Larnaka and Limassol in the south, Paphos (Ktima) in the west, and Kyrenia in the north. Connected by good roads, these urban centers control the approaches to hideouts and strongholds in the mountains. British Governor Sir John Harding, referring to the fight against the Greek Cypriot guerrillas, observed that "no matter what may be going on in the Kyrenia and Troodos mountains, control of Nicosia and the communications to the ports is vital to control the island as a whole."³

British Activity in Cyprus Arouses Greek Expectations of Enosis

Apprehensive about Russian moves into the eastern Mediterranean and Middle East, Great Britain in 1878 concluded with Turkey an agreement known as the Cyprus Convention. By its terms, Great Britain pledged to help Turkey defend herself against Russian incursions; in return, the Sultan consented that Cyprus, juridically still Turkish, be occupied and administered by Great Britain.⁴

When Cyprus came under British rule, the enosis movement in the island gained a new lease on life. The Cypriot Greeks hoped that Great Britain would cede Cyprus to Greece, just as 15 years earlier it had transferred to Greece the Ionian Islands in the Adriatic Sea. This hope was not realized. When Turkey joined Germany in World War I and declared war on Great Britain, the British abrogated the Cyprus Convention and annexed the island in November 1914. In 1915, however, they offered to cede Cyprus to Greece on condition that Greece join the Allies. The Greek king, Constantine I, who favored Germany, declined, but the offer created an expectation among the Greeks that the British government was committed to enosis if Greece should enter the war on the Allied side. Although Greece did join the Allies in 1916, the offer was not renewed. Rather, the British annexation of Cyprus was confirmed in 1923 at the Peace Treaty of Lausanne, to which both Greece and Turkey were signatories. Two years later, Cyprus officially became a crown colony *in the* British Empire.⁵

British Interests and Turkish Feelings Militate Against Enosis

Again after World War II, the Greeks expected the British to permit Cyprus to unite with Greece, in recognition of Greek and Greek Cypriot participation in the war effort against the Axis. But the British, who may not have been particularly opposed to enosis in principle, now feared that Greece, threatened by communism after World War II, might fall into the Communist camp. The time was thus considered not propitious to unite Greece and Cyprus. By 1950, Cyprus had again acquired great strategic significance for the British, who needed to protect their Middle East oil lines and who had already left Palestine and were being slowly forced out of Iraq, Jordan, and Egypt. For the British, enosis was out of the question.⁶

Furthermore, Turkey began to take a strong stand against enosis, using the issue in the later 1950's partly to divert public attention from its own internal problems. At this point, Great Britain feared that concessions to either Greece or Turkey might so irritate the other as to threaten the NATO alliance in which all were partners.⁷ In July 1954, British policy with regard to Cyprus was that it could "never expect to be fully independent."⁸

The Turks on Cyprus, forming almost a fifth of the population, were widely scattered in villages and towns all over the island. Once the ruling class of Cyprus, the Turks had lived quietly and in most instances contentedly under the British, disregarding in the main the entire enosis movement. When it appeared possible, however, that enosis might be carried out, the Turkish Cypriots began to call for union with Turkey, or if that failed, at least partition of the island.⁹ Thus the Greeks and the Turks entered into open controversy about the future of the island.

British Economic and Political Administration of Cyprus

Under British administration, Cyprus enjoyed an economic prosperity that contrasted with the impoverished state of the dwindling population that had suffered inefficient administration and heavy taxation under Turkish rule prior to 1878.¹⁰ British efforts to reforest the island, introduce modern methods of cultivation, work the mineral resources, and maintain a stable economy produced in Cyprus a standard of living higher than that in either Greece or Turkey.

The economy of Cyprus is unusually diversified for the size of the country. In 1954, approximately 50 percent of the gainfully employed population was engaged in agriculture. Of the gross domestic product, agriculture accounted for 25 percent, mining about 14 percent, and manufacturing and construction about 18 percent. Despite the insurgency, the national income of Cyprus rose from £61.4 million in 1955 to £72.8 million in 1956. Taking into account a development plan for which the British allocated £500,000 for a six-year period ending in 1960, the economic prospects of Cyprus were too encouraging to justify a sense of economic dissatisfaction on the part of the population.

In the same way, the administration of the island was not a basic factor in fomenting the insurgency. The island was governed under a British high commissioner who in 1925 assumed the title of governor. The legislative council, which then included the governor, nine official members, twelve members elected by Greek voters, and three chosen by Turkish voters, was suspended in 1931 after Greek disturbances over education, finances, and the importance of the legislative council.¹¹ Legislative authority was then vested in the governor, who had an executive council, consisting of four official and three nonofficial (two Greeks and one Turk) members. The function of the executive council was to advise the governor on new legislation.

The island had only limited self-government at the municipal level. There were 16 municipalities that elected their municipal councils in proportion to their Greek and Turkish populations, but the 625 villages had commissioners appointed by the governor. There were 246 Greek and 56 Turkish villages; in some 323 mixed villages, the governor appointed separate Greek and Turkish commissioners, known as muktars.¹²

Role of the Ethnarchy and the Communist Party in the Greek Community

Under this system of government, political parties in the Western sense failed to develop among either Greeks or Turks. The nationalist Greeks relied on the structure of the church, which had represented the Greek majority under Turkish rule within the millet (ethno-religious community) system of the Ottoman Empire. The archbishop or ethnarch, who was traditionally elected by universal suffrage, was the ecclesiastical leader of the Greeks and secular head of their community. The ethnarchy has a long history that goes back to Sultan Mehmet II (1451-81 A.D.), who recognized the patriarch of Constantinople as head of all Greek Christian subjects, with jurisdictional rights over them. The ethnarchic council of Cyprus, which planned and initiated the armed uprising in April 1955, consisted of about 30 lay members representing all Greek groups, except the Communists, on all parts of the islands.¹³

The Greek majority had consistently rejected any form of self-government, insisting on "enosis and only enosis." In May 1948, the British had made the island new constitutional offers, to include a legislature of 26 members, all but 4 of whom were to be elected. Of the elected members 18 were to be on the general electoral register and 4 on the Turkish communal register. Although the ethnarchy refused to participate in the provisional consultative assembly, the Communist Party of Cyprus (AKEL) accepted the idea of self-government. Without the Greek Cypriot nationalists, however, the consultative assembly was unable to produce an acceptable constitution. The ethnarchy took the view that any acquiescence to a constitution would be a betrayal of the enosis movement.¹⁴ On January 15, 1950, the ethnarchy held a plebiscite which showed 97 percent of the Greek Cypriots voting for enosis. AKEL then had little influence against enosis. On December 13, 1950, the ethnarch, Archbishop Makarios III, issued in Cyprus a proclamation for a united struggle.

Greek Cypriot Leaders: Makarios and Grivas

The dominant personality of the Greek Cypriot insurgency was Archbishop Makarios III. Born Michael Charalambos Mouskos in August 1913 of a farm family in the village of Ano Pannayia in the Paphos district, he received his early education at the old and rich monastery of Kykkou. After studying theology and law in Greece and the United States, he was elected the bishop of Citium in 1948 and assumed the ecclesiastical name Makarios, meaning "blessed." In October 1950, at the age of 37, he was elected archbishop of the church of Cyprus, by popular vote of the Greek community. His mission as an ethnarch and as Makarios III was to continue the struggle of his predecessors for enosis.¹⁵

In 1952, Makarios invited the Cypriot-born Lt. Col. Georgios Grivas, a retired officer of the Greek army, to organize the military aspect of the insurgency. Choosing Digenis Akritas, the name of the legendary hero of a Cypriot medieval epic poem, as his nom de guerre and keeping his true identity secret, Grivas became the architect of the underground and the guerrilla structure of the insurgency.¹⁶ The high reputation of the archbishop and the guerrilla activity of Grivas during World War II provided the Greek Cypriots with two leaders who had the prestige and practical knowledge to initiate and conduct the insurgency.

The primary factor in the Cyprus insurgency was the historical background of ethnic, cultural, and social affinity to Greece rather than discontent with current political or economic conditions on the island. The British could not curb the sentiment for enosis which had grown for 135 years, and they were unable to convince the ethnarchy to stop agitation for union with Greece.

INSURGENCY

The main objective of the growing insurgency in Cyprus was union (enosis) with Greece. Lacking the means to confront Great Britain militarily, the immediate aims of the Cypriot insurgents were to secure the direct support of the Greek government, to use the United Nations to build up favorable international pressure, and to persuade British public opinion that self-determination was long overdue for Cyprus. When the British government declined to discuss the possibility of enosis with Greece, Greek Cypriot leaders were convinced by the spring of 1954 that armed resistance would have to be undertaken.¹⁷

The Greek Government Supports Enosis; EOKA Formed

At this point the Greek government of Prime Minister Alexandros Papagos departed from its post-Lausanne policy, which had tried to resolve the Cyprus question within the framework of friendly Greek-British relations; on May 3, 1954, he appealed to the United Nations for the right of self-determination for the people of Cyprus.¹⁸ This action came into conflict with

British policy which held that Cyprus could never expect to be fully independent. The United Nations declined to place the question on the agenda of the General Assembly.

Prime Minister Papagos also pledged Greece's support to Archbishop Makarios for an armed insurgency in Cyprus.¹⁸ On September 24, 1954, the Greek government again appealed to the United Nations for self-determination on behalf of Cyprus, but no favorable action was taken. This left the way open for Colonel Grivas to enter Cyprus in the fall of 1954 with a small group of armed Cypriots who, calling themselves the National Organization of Cypriot Fighters (EOKA), promptly organized a campaign of violence. No overt acts of violence occurred, however, until the spring of 1955.

Greek Cypriot Strategy

The overall strategy of the resistance movement in Cyprus was less military than political. The leaders of the enosis movement could not expect to drive the British out of Cyprus by force of arms, and the insurgency had only a limited military objective—to avoid a direct military confrontation and to keep the British off balance while pressure built up from below. Therefore, most of the resistance was passive.

This strategy was imposed by military necessity. Cyprus was an isolated island which, under a British air and naval blockade, could expect no significant logistic support from outside. With their very limited resources, the guerrillas could not safely develop lines of supply, depots, and other installations. They could employ no conventional tactics, and their supplies of arms and ammunition were small. Without a hinterland for retreat, the insurgents had to base their tactics on the use of hideouts from which small-scale operations could be conducted. The EOKA guerrillas did not even have the status of irregular combatants, who could claim recognition under the terms of the Geneva Convention.²⁰

EOKA employed demonstrations, sabotage, sniping, arson, hit-and-run raids on isolated military posts, and the liquidation of collaborators primarily to create a climate of emergency. These incidents were used not so much to achieve any military objectives as to supply the ethnarchy with support for the argument that the popular will for enosis could not be suppressed. Propaganda at home and abroad was the principal weapon of the insurgency. The object was to create psychological pressure which would force the British to discuss self-determination for the island—and self-determination meant enosis.

The Ethnarchy and Its Supporters

The Greek Cypriots pursued these political aims under the supreme authority of Archbishop Makarios III, whom the British administration recognized as the spokesman of the Greek Cypriot community. In the fall of 1955, the British began to negotiate with him for settlement. When evidence indicated, however, that Makarios was connected with the militant underground,

he was exiled to the Seychelles Islands in the Indian Ocean on March 9, 1956.²¹ But Makarios was indispensable, and the British were unable to find another Greek Cypriot leader with whom to continue negotiations while the Greek Cypriot resistance continued for another year. Following a statement by Makarios that EOKA would cease operations if the British ended the state of emergency, and an offer by Grivas of a truce if Makarios were released, the British released the archbishop from exile on March 28, 1957, on condition that he not return to Cyprus. This ban was not lifted until 1959, but in December 1957 the British resumed talks with him as the only leader who could speak for the Greek Cypriots.

Except for the Greek Communists, who originally and for most of the period opposed enosis, and for the few Greeks with vested interests in the British administration, who at most regarded the insurgency as premature, the ethnarchy appears to have had overwhelming popular support. Most Greek Cypriots placed their resources and organizations at the service of the enosis movement.

Greek Communists and Turkish Cypriots Oppose the Insurgency

Only two groups in Cyprus actively opposed the insurgency—the Greek Communists and the Turkish Cypriots. Although the Communists had a strong hold over organized labor, AKEL exerted little influence on the enosis movement. Probably underestimating the prospects of the insurgency, AKEL prematurely issued a declaration²² on January 3, 1955, denouncing EOKA; and on April 24, the Communist Party of Greece (KKE) further irritated the nationalists by revealing in a broadcast beamed to Cyprus that the man behind the nom de guerre Digenis, the leader of EOKA, was none other than Col. Georgios Grivas.²³ By the spring of 1958, EOKA and AKEL had begun a war of their own in which as many Communists were to be killed as British agents.²⁴

Although the leaders of the insurgency sought to avoid conflict with the Cypriot Turks, the involvement of the latter on the side of the counterinsurgents made conflict inevitable. The first Turk to be killed, on January 11, 1956, nearly a year after the insurgency began, was a policeman, as were the next two Turkish casualties in March and May. This conflict with the Turkish police, who composed the major part of the local Cyprus force, eventually culminated in an intercommunal war which, beginning in June 1958, lasted for two months and resulted in fatalities of 53 Turks and 56 Greeks.²⁵ Thus EOKA faced, in addition to the British and the Communists, a third opponent in the Turks.

Organisation for Insurgency

The political and military structure of the insurgency centered on the Pan-Cyprian National Organization of Youth (PEON),²⁶ which Archbishop Makarios established in 1950 with the

assistance of Grivas. The organization spearheaded social action throughout the island, conducting demonstrations and protestations. This open youth activity had a unifying effect and intensified the traditional feeling of the older generations for enosis. When in 1953 the British proscribed PEON, it went underground and another equally militant youth group, the Orthodox Christian Union of Youth (OHEU), came into existence.

The complex political structure of the insurgency also included the powerful and influential Pan-Agrarian Union of Cyprus (PEK), which represented the vast majority of the Greek peasants of Cyprus. Among the workers, the nationalist Confederation of Cypriot Workers (SEK) supported the insurgency, but its trade union role was secondary to that of the Communist-controlled Pan-Cyprian Federation of Labor (PEO). Only about 50 percent of the urban labor force was organized. Although the Communists had a strong hold over most organized workers, both organized and unorganized workers were under the overall influence of the church. The non-Communist Greek press in Cyprus actively supported the insurgency. The popular will to fight was strong.

Grivas Recruits Guerrillas

Evidence indicates that Grivas had begun planning the insurgency as early as 1950, soon after the defeat of the Communist guerrillas in Greece. His agents had canvassed for potential fighters long before the winter of 1954-55, when Grivas personally reviewed each candidate in Cyprus and made the assignments himself. The guerrilla bands and sabotage units consisted of young men recruited mainly from the ranks of the youth organization PEON.²⁷ A priest known as Papagathangelou or Papastavrou was the principal recruiting agent. Under the blessing of the church, he administered the EOKA oath, which in essence called for liberty or death. The first recruits were sworn in on November 18, 1954, in Nicosia, where the Pan-Cyprian Gymnasium (junior college) had been the traditional youth indoctrination center of the enosis movement. Many secondary school youths also went underground, and later in the insurgency young girls were trained to use revolvers. Except for Colonel Grivas, there were no known volunteers from Greece among the Cypriot fighters.²⁸

EOKA's leadership, which developed during the winter of 1954-55, was highly centralized. At the top of the pyramid was Grivas-Digenis. "In character," wrote a British officer who fought him, "he is austere, self-disciplined, determined, energetic and ruthless to a degree... an excellent administrator... a master of disguise... a fanatical champion of enosis." Extremely rightwing in politics, Grivas was termed "pathologically anti-Communist" by British Governor Harding.²⁹

EOKA Intelligence and Counterintelligence

With only a small central staff, Grivas' mobile EOKA headquarters were defended by a few guerrilla groups, each numbering from five to ten men. From the winter of 1954 to the spring

of 1955, Grivas' headquarters were in the village of Khlorakas on the west coast of the island. In April 1955, he moved to Strovolos, a suburb of Nicosia, setting up headquarters in the home of "a politically irreproachable man." In June 1955, Grivas took cover in a prototype hide near the summer headquarters of the British governor in the Troodos mountains.³⁰ Grivas-Digenis himself became practically invisible, protected as he was by intricate and tight security and an excellent counterintelligence net. He eluded British intelligence and searches through all four years of the insurgency.

The EOKA intelligence network had agents in all parts of the six districts of Cyprus. It had spies and informants high in the civil service, in the lower levels of the administration, within the British military establishment, and even among the minorities. Barber shops were centers for transmitting intelligence. There were 20 intelligence operational areas covering the whole island, and 8 large monasteries and their dependencies offered church facilities for the clandestine movement. The Kykkou monastery was the principal communication center.³¹ EOKA had excellent British maps, showing communications facilities and "branch cart tracks" which were the principal avenues of the underground. The courier service between Athens and Nicosia remained intact throughout the insurgency.

The EOKA underground had cells all over the island, most of which operated with the object of spreading out and diverting British security forces. The guerrilla outposts in the area of Macheras and the Troodos mountains were described by a British source as extraordinary examples of military engineering.³² Here the hard-core EOKA fighters moved under heavy cover within a network of hideouts.

EOKA Operations

The signal for the armed resistance was given on April 1, 1955, when bombs were exploded in the three principal cities of Nicosia, Limassol, and Larnaka. This date has since been observed as EOKA Day. The first ambush of British troops did not occur until that November at Khandria. The most outstanding EOKA ambush was conducted on December 15, 1955, when a British patrol under Maj. Brian Coombs was trapped on the road near Lefka.

Although guerrilla operations were fought by relatively few men, they fought well and, when necessary, to the death. Marcos Dracos, one of the principal guerrilla chiefs, fell defending himself in January 1955, and became the first hero of the insurgency. In February 1956, EOKA guerrillas fought a long delaying action against superior British forces until some 30 men, among them the famed insurgent Polycarpus Georgiades, were taken prisoner. A typical guerrilla operation was the skirmish fought by the Afxentiou band of four men on March 3, 1957, at the forest of Macheras. Here Gregory Afxentiou, whose guerrilla name was "Zidvos," was trapped and killed, to become the principal hero of the insurgency.³³

External Sources of Supply and Political Aid

Most of the arms and explosives used by EOKA apparently came from Greece. The person principally responsible for supplying EOKA was reputedly Efstathopoulos, a former member of Grivas' wartime "X" organization; a second agent was a wealthy Greek, Zafirios Valvis. Weapons were smuggled by catques; but, after the British established naval patrols, weapons were imported in parts by travelers and through the mails. The January 25, 1955, capture of the Aghios Georgios schooner, which carried a significant consignment of dynamite, pistols, grenades, and automatic weapons, was a heavy blow to EOKA.³⁴ There is no evidence that Greek security authorities ever took any action to prevent the export of military supplies from Greek ports.

When hostilities finally ended, EOKA turned in 600 guns, 2,000 bombs, 3,230 pounds of explosives, and thousands of rounds of ammunition. Most of these weapons dated from World War I. However, it appears that the best weapons were stored away for future use. It is estimated that of 4,758 home made bombs, 927 caused major damage and 855 minor damage, and 2,976 failed to explode or were discovered by British security officers. These bombs are estimated to have caused about £10 million damage to the British administration of the island, although their cost to EOKA was only £50,000.³⁵

The principal external aid to the Greek Cypriot insurgency came from Greece and the Greeks overseas. More than 100,000 Greek Cypriots living abroad—in England, the United States, Africa, and other parts of the world—pressed the Cypriot aim for union with Greece. Private Greek agents, acting for EOKA from Greek and other Mediterranean ports, supplied arms and ammunition. In addition, from 1954 on, the Greek government formally espoused the campaign for enosis.³⁶ It provided open political support and extensive propaganda through its diplomatic and consular establishments throughout the world. The Greek Foreign Office offered its facilities to the Panhellenic Committee for the Union of Cyprus with Greece (PEEK), which was under the active chairmanship of the Archbishop of Athens and of All Greece. The Athens radio initiated a campaign against British rule in Cyprus in such a manner that the British felt obliged to jam the Greek broadcasts starting in March 1956. The Greek government brought the Cyprus question to the United Nations on a number of occasions—in May and September 1954, September 1955, July 1957, and August 1958.³⁷ The United Nations took no action that would militate against British interests in Cyprus, but Athens and the Cypriot ethnarchy were able to argue their case internationally and to gain a propaganda advantage.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

From the day the British took over the island in 1878, they were aware of the enosis movement. British diplomacy, however, was able to contain the problem until 1947, when the United

Kingdom was no longer able to provide defense support to Greece. From then on, the United Kingdom had little leverage on the Greek government and thus lost the key to keeping the Cyprus question quiet.

Underestimating the intensity of the postwar demand for enosis in both Greece and Cyprus, British authorities appear to have been slow to take those measures that would have either prevented the insurgency or postponed a settlement. The proscription of PEON in 1953 by the government of Cyprus was indicative of the British estimate that the enosis movement could be contained within police proportions.

The British Offer Political Alternatives to Enosis

To counter the growing feeling for self-determination among the Greek Cypriots, the British had advanced several constitutional plans for self-government; these plans, however, excluded enosis. The first postwar constitutional proposal, made in May 1948, had been rejected by the Greek Cypriots. In July 1954, the British made a similar proposal, only to have it rejected again, partly in reaction to British plans to move their Middle East land and air headquarters from Jordan to Cyprus and partly because the underground was already getting underway.

After the Greek government brought the Cyprus problem to the United Nations in May 1954, the British government in June invited the foreign ministers of Greece and Turkey to a conference in London for the purpose of considering "political and defense questions which affect the Eastern Mediterranean, including Cyprus."³⁸ On August 29, the Tripartite Conference assembled against the background of a warning by Archbishop Makarios that the Cypriots would not consider binding any decision that they did not ratify. Each nation then stated its own position. The British favored self-government but not self-determination; the Greeks insisted on the right of Cypriot self-determination; and the Turks wanted partition. The Turkish press threatened to make counterclaims against Greek territory in western Thrace if self-determination were permitted. The conference broke up in September 1955 following Turkish riots in Istanbul against the Greeks living in that city. The major and perhaps the only accomplishment of the Tripartite Conference was to emphasize the international implications of the Cyprus problem. A few weeks after the Tripartite Conference, the Cyprus question was taken up by the General Committee of the 10th General Assembly of the United Nations, but attempts to inscribe the question on the agenda were voted down.³⁹

Governor Harding Reinforces the Police and Puts Emergency Measures Into Effect

When Field Marshal Sir John Harding, the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, assumed the governorship of Cyprus and the personal direction of the counterinsurgency effort on October 3,

1955, he reinforced the British military framework on the island. He brought with him 300 top-notch British policemen of all ranks and skills, but apparently he had little success in weeding out of the local police force all the pro-EOKA elements.¹⁰ Within weeks of his arrival, he both declared a state of emergency in Cyprus and energetically resumed talks with Archbishop Makarios which lasted until February 1956.

The state of emergency declared on November 26, 1955, included the proscription of all the principal Greek organizations in Cyprus. The Communist Party of Cyprus was proscribed in December 1956, but its principal labor arm (PEO) was even then permitted to operate as a counterweight to the outlawed SEK, the nationalist labor organization supporting EOKA. Meanwhile, Governor Harding promulgated emergency regulations. For example, offenders under 18 convicted for an offense under the emergency regulations could be sentenced to not more than 12 strokes with "a light rod or cane or birch." Any Greek possessing an EOKA leaflet was subject to three years' imprisonment. Persons suspected of underground activities could be detained without trial, but such detention was generally restricted to persons known to be actively in sympathy with the insurgency. During the first year of the insurgency, some 136 Greeks were detained on the basis of the new law, and some 600 persons were sentenced by the courts to terms of imprisonment for forbidden acts.¹¹

The British Exile Archbishop Makarios and Take Strong Defensive Measures

Meanwhile, British negotiations with the archbishop were dragging. When Makarios declined to denounce EOKA's terrorist activities, the governor took a drastic step. In March 1956, he exiled the archbishop, together with the bishop of Kyrenia, a principal spokesman for the enosis movement, to the Seychelles Islands, on evidence that the church leaders were connected with the EOKA underground. Communication between insurgents and counterinsurgents thus broke down, and the British set out to crush EOKA.

By this time, counterterrorist operations were well structured. The British reorganized their internal security on the basis of joint civil-military police teams in each of the six administrative districts of Cyprus. All important buildings were protected by barbed wire and sandbags. To prevent logistic support from reaching the insurgents, armed patrols and convoys of Land Rovers traveled the roads, while the navy and air force kept a constant blockade of the island. Cyprus was like an armed camp.¹²

Seeking to pacify the island, the British probed into the mountains, searched villages, set up road blocks, established patrols, rounded up persons for detention, effected curfews, made mass arrests for interrogation, and carried out punitive actions after each EOKA killing. Greek Cypriots claimed that the British violated human rights by mass detentions, severe curfews, floggings of youths, and the invasion of homes and churches. In the British view, these

measures were "trivial," designed to inflict "indignities rather than sufferings." British authorities have asserted that they applied counterterrorist measures in such a manner that they could avoid inflicting hardship on law-abiding Greek Cypriots. As an example, the British point to the incident at Lefkoniko, where an EOKA bomb exploded and killed members of the Highland Light Infantry football team, but there were no reprisals against the Greeks of this village.⁴³

The British Attempt To Detect and Destroy the Guerrillas Through Intelligence and Military Operations

The British had a large, island-wide intelligence and propaganda network. Security measures included the maintenance of dossiers on Greeks communicating between Athens and Nicosia. The search for Grivas-Digenis was vital to the British, who had lost track of him after he entered Cyprus secretly in the fall of 1954. The British even used a pack of bloodhounds to try to track him down, but Grivas later claimed that by using garlic he threw his four-footed pursuers off his scent. British intelligence offered £100 for a suit worn by Grivas, but the EOKA leader had his wife in Athens burn all his clothes. The British intercepted phone calls, orders, and letters and in the summer of 1956 even claimed to have captured Grivas' diary. But although the British gained good insight into EOKA, they failed to find Grivas.⁴⁴

The main British military tactic was to establish close cordons within which security forces could smoke out and destroy hidden guerrillas. In January 1955, this tactic was successfully employed in tracking down Marcos Dracos. That May, a similar operation was conducted against EOKA caves in the mountains above the town of Polis in the northwestern part of Cyprus. In February 1956, some 30 EOKA guerrillas were similarly rounded up, among them the famed Polycarpus Georgiades.⁴⁵ In March 1957, another guerrilla chief, Gregory Afentliou, was smoked out in an operation that effectively employed helicopters.

These intensive British operations usually combined elements from the army, navy, marine commandos, air force, a parachute regiment, and police with dogs. Slow Chipmunk and Pioneer aircraft, as well as helicopters, were used to fly over road convoys and military vehicles and to spot and track any visible activity. Nearly all standing formations of the British military establishment were eventually used in Cyprus, with troop strength reaching approximately 25,000 to 30,000 men. For much of the period, there was a well-armed and trained British soldier for every 20 Greek Cypriots. A major problem, however, was apparently that British troops were inexperienced in arranging and maintaining the cordons, especially at night, and consequently were reluctant to expose themselves to the "ghost-like assassins" of EOKA.⁴⁶

The military campaign against the insurgents was in full swing by the spring of 1956, when security forces were strengthened to conduct a large-scale offensive operation in the Troodos mountains. Probably because of this pressure, the EOKA leader Grivas-Digenis offered a

truce in August, but British terms were unconditional surrender, and these were rejected. After the Suez crisis in the summer of 1956, the British had available considerable reinforced mobile striking forces and a large number of helicopters whose pilots had learned to overcome the technical difficulties of operating over steep mountain slopes. Nonetheless, the insurgency reached a peak in November 1956; during this month, 416 acts of violence were recorded, including 16 killings—as against the previous high of 395 acts in May.

Another all-out British offensive was launched in March 1957. According to a British source, if this counteroffensive had lasted a little longer, the insurgency might have been suppressed.⁴⁷ However, on March 14, EOKA suspended operations at the request of Mnakarios as a condition for his release on March 28, 1957. For seven months there were no acts of violence, but EOKA recommenced its campaign in October 1957, apparently to increase the pressure in connection with the forthcoming debate on Cyprus in the United Nations General Assembly.

Increasing Use of Detection Techniques and Devices

While British operations had some effect, EOKA's guerrilla force had remarkable recuperative powers. For each guerrilla killed or captured, one soon replaced him from the waiting list of Cypriot youths. In May 1958, a large offensive covering an area of five square miles was mounted north of Limassol, with the object of capturing the elusive EOKA leader Grivas-Digenis. A great variety of devices was used to smoke out Grivas-Digenis and his guerrillas from their hides in monasteries, villages, and caves. Helicopters, dogs, fast patrol boats, and planes flying searchlights were all employed. Although EOKA guerrillas were pursued relentlessly and at high pressure, and a reward of £10,000 was offered for Digenis, dead or alive, the British failed to capture the EOKA leader.⁴⁸

The royal engineers, who had an outstanding record of efficiency and determination, discovered and destroyed scores of hideouts. Later in 1958, the sappers acquired a new piece of secret electronic equipment which would reveal whether the floor or the wall of a structure was solid or hollow and measure the size of the space. While this device proved effective, it was introduced too late to change the course of events.⁴⁹

The Turkish Cypriots Demand Partition and Turn to Violence

In mid-1958, the British faced, in addition to EOKA's Greek insurgency, a new problem in relation to the Turkish community of Cyprus. To some extent the British had relied on the Cypriot Turks, who had villages located in all parts of the island, to supply the greater part of the government's local police. British intelligence also made good use of Turkish sources of information covering EOKA movements. Although the British welcomed support from the

Cypriot Turks in combating EOKA and probably sought Turkish cooperation in countering Greece's claim to Cyprus, they were finally confronted with an intercommunal war that flared during the last year of the insurgency.

Until the beginning of 1958, tension between Greeks and Turks had been light. In that year, however, Turkish resistance developed, not only against the Greeks, but also against the British, who appeared to the Turks to be yielding to Greek pressure.⁵⁰ Under the leadership of the president of the Turkish community, Dr. Fasil Kutchuk, a practicing physician, the Turks demanded the partition of the island. The Cyprus question thus became a three-way conflict.

The instrument of Turkish violence was the militant TMT (Turk Makavet Teskilati, or Turkish Resistance Organization), which in 1957 replaced a previous Turkish underground organization called Volkan.⁵¹ The leader of TMT was Rauf Denktash, a practicing lawyer. Although Denktash was a political opponent of Dr. Kutchuk, the latter approved of TMT's actions since he felt that partition of Cyprus was the only acceptable solution. TMT men, some of whom were trained in Turkey, were well armed. They soon succeeded in infiltrating the ranks of the Turkish police in the service of the Cyprus government.

In January 1958, TMT was responsible for violent Turkish demonstrations in which seven Greek Cypriots were killed. On June 7, a bomb exploded at the Turkish Information Office in Nicosia, and this became the signal for more trouble. The British immediately imposed a curfew, but, three days later, when it was lifted so that the Turks could buy food and provisions, an orgy of looting broke out in the main municipal market. Despite British efforts, intercommunal clashes continued throughout June and July before the situation was brought under control.⁵² Although some incidents occurred later, this was the last major outbreak of fighting.

The End of the Emergency; Its Cost in Casualties

In July 1958, EOKA responded affirmatively to British calls for a military truce, but in August Makarios opposed British plans for settlement and fighting broke out again. After four months of violence, EOKA renewed the truce, and 1959 began with good prospects for an agreement. It was not, however, until December 4, 1959, that the state of emergency was finally lifted.

In summary, by the end of 1958, some 393 persons had been killed and 1,076 wounded as a result of the insurgency. Of the 393 fatalities, 142 were British, 218 Greek Cypriots, 29 Turkish Cypriots, and 4 others. Of the wounded, 684 were British, 197 Greek Cypriots, 172 Turkish Cypriots, and 23 others. In addition, Greek-Turkish riots and the intercommunal strife in mid-1958 caused casualties to Greek Cypriots of 60 dead and 98 wounded, and to Turkish Cypriots of 55 dead and 86 wounded.⁵³

Renewed Efforts To Find a Political Solution for the Cypriot Question

The counterinsurgency was militarily inconclusive, and the British appear to have realized that the insurgency could not be suppressed by military measures alone. But political overtures had also been unavailing—talks with Makarios had broken down, the Tripartite Conference in London had failed, and the United Nations had declined to take a substantive position on the case, consistent with its resolution of February 1957 which had asked all the parties involved to settle the question amicably among themselves.

Throughout the period of the emergency, the British had realized that the problem required a political solution. By the end of 1957, it seemed imperative to establish a new policy to deal with a situation that was deteriorating into an intercommunal war having international repercussions for Greece and Turkey. In December 1957, the British had therefore replaced Governor Harding with Sir Hugh Foot,⁵⁴ a man who had successfully worked out a political settlement in Trinidad. Sir Hugh came to Cyprus at a critical time in the emergency, when the possibility of a settlement appeared most dim and the Greek and Turkish communities were nearing their clash. By mid-June 1958, the British were ready with a new proposal and, on June 19, Prime Minister Harold Macmillan announced a new British policy for Cyprus.⁵⁵

The new plan provided for a seven-year period of administrative partnership between Greece, Turkey, and Great Britain. This was to be a form of tridominion which would permit a separate house of representatives for each of the two communities, dual nationality for those who wished it, and an ultimate joint sovereignty over Cyprus by the three powers. Neither partition nor self-determination was to be allowed for seven years, but no solution was ruled out thereafter. Hence, no party was called upon to abandon its ultimate aims. The Greeks promptly rejected these proposals, but the door had been opened for the termination of violence and for the initiation of negotiations which culminated early the next year in agreements reached in Zurich and London.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

In December 1958, Athens and Ankara initiated talks in Zurich for a settlement of the Cyprus question; and on February 11, 1959, the two countries reached an agreement for an independent Cyprus. The idea of an independent Cyprus was acceptable to Archbishop Makarios, who in a press interview in September 1958 had advocated independence, excluding either enosis with Greece or the partition of the island between Greeks and Turks, under the proviso that any changes in the status of Cyprus would be subject to the sanction of the United Nations.

The Settlement Rules Out Both Enosis and Partition

The final settlement was concluded in London on February 17-19, 1959, between Greece, Turkey, and the United Kingdom. The representatives of the Greek and Turkish communities in

Cyprus were invited to initial the settlement outlined in the Zurich-London agreements. Three treaties--the Treaty of Establishment, the Treaty of Guarantee, and the Treaty of Alliance--formed the basis of the settlement and were given constitutional force.¹⁶

Basically, the settlement created a Republic of Cyprus with limited independence. It explicitly ruled out the union of Cyprus with Greece and any partition of the island between Greeks and Turks. To guarantee these basic provisions of the settlement, the independence of Cyprus was restricted in both internal and external affairs by the tripartite agreements and a constitution which incorporated the principle of equal and separate existence between the island's Greek majority and the Turkish minority.

The settlement defined the territories which make up Cyprus, including British bases at Dhekelia and Akrotiri over which the United Kingdom has conditional sovereignty. The two bases cover an area of 99 square miles, which approximates the size of Malta, and contain 13 villages with a population of about 8,000 Cypriots. Certain villages within the base area are excluded from British control. For the administration and the maintenance of these bases, the agreement authorizes the use of facilities and services in other parts of the island. The agreement significantly provides that, in the event that the British liquidate the bases, their territory will revert to Cyprus.

Greece, Turkey, and Great Britain were committed to defend the independence of Cyprus. The settlement explicitly prohibited "any activity likely to promote, directly or indirectly, either union with any other State or partition of the Island." To enforce this provision, the treaty gave each of the guarantor powers the right to take action, jointly or singly, "with the sole aim of re-establishment of the state of affairs created by the Treaty of Guarantee." Greece and Turkey acquired the right to station troops on the island at the ratio of 950 and 650 respectively, in order to "resist any aggression, direct or indirect, against the independence or territorial integrity of the Republic."

Structure and Organization of the Republic's Government

The settlement included an agreement on the basic structure of the republic's government. This agreement served as a framework for the Constitution, and a Joint Constitutional Commission, established to draft the specific provisions, completed its work on April 6, 1960.

The new state was given a presidential system in which the president was to be elected by the Greeks and the vice president by the Turks. The two heads of state would each have, separately and conjointly, the power of final veto over legislation and decisions of the council of ministers on foreign affairs, defense, security matters, the budget, and taxation. In foreign affairs, the veto was not applicable to the republic's participation in international organizations and pacts to which Greece and Turkey were parties. It was apparent that in the absence of

goodwill between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots these provisions of the settlement could paralyze the administration of the state.

Furthermore, the settlement provided for proportional representation of the Greek and Turkish communities in the various branches of the government, but the proportions were not figured on the actual strength of the two communities. In the council of ministers, the house of representatives, the civil service, and the police, the Greeks were given 70 percent and the Turks 30 percent of the positions. The army was to include 40 percent Turks. Moreover, the Constitution required separate Greek and Turkish administrations in each of the five principal municipalities—a provision which was to become a source of conflict between the two communities from the outset of the settlement. Each community was given a communal chamber with the right to levy taxes from its own constituency for religious, cultural, educational, and other purely communal needs.

Constitutional provisions placed the administration of justice in neutral hands. The supreme court, with one Turkish and two Greek members, was to be presided over by a neutral non-Cypriot judge with the right of two votes. The constitutional court was also placed under another neutral presiding judge who had the deciding vote between one Greek and one Turkish member of the court.

For the transfer of sovereignty, a transitional committee and a joint council of seven Greek and three Turkish Cypriots were set up, with the responsibility for drawing up, adopting, and reorganizing the government's machinery. After a year and a half, preparations for independence were completed.

The insurgency was thus finally terminated by a political settlement designed to recognize the Greek character of the majority in Cyprus, to protect the national character and culture of the Turkish minority, and to provide the United Kingdom with defense facilities essential to its national interest in the area.

The Settlement Is Accepted by the Greek and Turkish Governments and by the Turkish Cypriots

The Greek Parliament ratified the agreements on February 28, 1959, and the Turkish National Assembly approved them on March 4. Great Britain welcomed the settlement. In Cyprus, the response was less positive: The Turks pledged themselves to "observe to the letter" the Cyprus settlement, and the Greeks accepted the Zurich-London agreements with obvious reservations. Ethnarch Makarios did not participate in the Greek-Turkish negotiations at Zurich, and in London he argued against certain provisions of the settlement. He finally accepted the agreements as the first stage toward ultimate independence. Grivas-Digenis issued a statement on March 17, 1959, acknowledging the agreements, and called upon Greek

Cypriots "to remain united around our Ethnarch, who today is our symbol of unity and strength." Soon after, however, he denounced the settlement and took issue with Archbishop Makarios.

Presidential elections were held in mid-December 1959, with the result that Archbishop Makarios was elected president by 68 percent of the Greek vote. The Turks declared Dr. Fazil Kutchuk to be vice president without an electoral contest. The elections for the house of representatives were held on July 31, 1960, and the two communal chambers were elected on August 7. A British-Cypriot Base Agreement was concluded in July 1960. The Constitution was put into force on August 16, 1960, when Cyprus was declared an independent republic. Soon after Cyprus became a member of the United Nations and the British Commonwealth of Nations.

The Basic Problem Remains: Greek Cypriots Still Want Enosis

The four-year insurgency in Cyprus had inflicted significant, but not irreparable damages on the economy of the island. There was a clear decline in the revenue and expenditures of the government, and many development projects had had to be suspended. Nonetheless, the commercial and industrial life of the island had continued to expand.

The most serious consequence of the insurgency was the deterioration of relations between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities, which had been living at peace for nearly 80 years under British rule. An independent Cyprus emerged with two hostile camps. Although the settlement took into consideration this consequence of the insurgency, the agreements themselves contained the seeds for continued strife between the Greeks and the Turks on the island and consequently for possible conflict between Greece and Turkey. The Turks welcomed the agreements, but the Greeks accepted them only reluctantly. It was the obvious intention of the Cypriot Greeks, who had little choice in the settlement, to bring about changes that would make Cyprus either more independent or an integral part of Greece.

The settlement began to break down in December 1963 when Archbishop Makarios proposed thirteen amendments to the Constitution with the view of overcoming an impasse that had developed over the administration of the municipalities. The Turks promptly rejected the Greek proposals. The ensuing violence between the two communities has undermined the very foundation of the regime created by the Zurich-London settlement. As of this writing, the situation is still unresolved.

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³Harding, "Terrorism in Cyprus," op. cit.

⁴Dwight Lee, Great Britain and the Cyprus Convention Policy, 1878 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1934).

⁵The Times (London), May 2, 1925, pp. 11c, 12b, 16, 18, and May 9, 1925, p. 13c.

⁶Great Britain, Cyprus: Statement of Policy (Cmd. 455; London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1958).

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⁸Colonial Secretary Mr. Hopkinson, quoted in Jureidini, "Cyprus," p. 56.

⁹Kerim K. Key, review of A. Suat Bilge's Le Conflit de Chypre et les Cypriotes Turcs (Ankara: Agans-Tuerk Mathassat, 1961), in The Middle East Journal (Autumn 1962).

¹⁰Great Britain, Reference Division, General Office of Information, Cyprus (No. 3932; London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, July 1958), p. 19.

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¹²Union of Journalists, Cyprus, p. 22.

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¹⁶Nearchos Klirides, O Digenis Akritas: O kainourgios mythikos iroas ton Ellinon (The Digenis Akritas: The New Mythological Hero of the Greeks) (Nicosia, 1961). See also Georgios Grivas-Digenis, "How To Conduct a Guerrilla War," in Vima (Athens) (September 29, daily through October 20, 1962).

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¹⁸The Greek Heritage of Cyprus, p. 142.

¹⁹Barker, Grivas, p. 69. See also Alexandros Papagos, To Kypriakon--O Logos tou Strataρχου Papagou Enopion tis Voullis Kata tin Synedriasin tis 7 Fevrouariou, 1955 (The

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³¹Mayew, Cyprus and Makarios, pp. 177-78, 236.

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³⁴Barker, Grivas, p. 168.

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³⁷Harding, "Terrorism in Cyprus," op. cit.

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³⁹Both quotations are in Maj. B. I. S. Gourlay, "Terror in Cyprus," Pt. I, Marine Corps Gazette, XLIII (August 1959), p. 34.

⁴⁰For a detailed description of the guerrillas' hideouts in caves of the Troodos mountains, see David Burk, "Cyprus," Leatherneck (February 1957), pp. 28-29.

⁴¹Byford-Jones, Grivas, pp. 58, 72-75.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 42-43.

⁴³Ibid., pp. 71, 112; Barker, Grivas, pp. 121-22.

⁴⁴Byford-Jones, Grivas, pp. 54, 61-66; Barker, Grivas, pp. 157ff.

⁴⁵Barker, Grivas, p. 8.

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⁵⁰Barker, Grivas, p. 106.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 102; Byford-Jones, Grivas, p. 87.

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⁵⁴Byford-Jones, Grivas, pp. 47-48, 70. See also Great Britain, Terrorism in Cyprus: The Captured Documents, tr. and issued by authority of the Secretary for the Colonies (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1956), pp. 1-42.

- ⁴⁵Barker, Grivas, p. 123; Byford-Jones, Grivas, p. 113.
- ⁴⁶Barker, Grivas, p. 123; Byford-Jones, Grivas, pp. 85, 89.
- ⁴⁷Barker, Grivas, p. 131.
- ⁴⁸Harding, "Terrorism in Cyprus," op. cit.; Byford-Jones, Grivas, pp. 118, 123.
- ⁴⁹Barker, Grivas, pp. 101-102, 131.
- ⁵⁰Great Britain, Cyprus (No. 3932), p. 11.
- ⁵¹Charles Foley, Island in Revolt (London: Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., 1962), pp. 200-202 for a discussion of TMT, and pp. 33, 135, 191, and 200-201 for a discussion of Volkan.
- ⁵²Great Britain, Cyprus (No. 3932), p. 11.
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- ⁵⁴(Sir) Hugh Foot, A Start in Freedom (London: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 256.
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Chapter Thirteen

**IRAQ
1961-1964**

by Mildred Freeland



IRAQ (1961-1964)

Chapter Thirteen

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by Mildred Vreeland

Although the government of Iraq was unable to defeat the Kurds militarily, it was politically able to avoid yielding to Kurdish demands for virtual autonomy, leaving this problem of internal conflict still unresolved

BACKGROUND

In one of a long series of encounters with the Kurdish minority within its borders, the Iraqi government faced guerrilla warfare lasting from September 1961 to February 1964. During the course of the two-and-a-half year rebellion the government changed hands twice; throughout the same period the Kurds were led by a single man, Mullah Mustafa Barzani, the remarkable military leader of one of the many Kurdish tribes. The insurgency did not constitute the first Kurdish effort to assert cultural and political autonomy; the Kurds in Iraq as well as in neighboring countries have long sought to establish various degrees of autonomy from central rule. In this particular effort, the Kurdish minority in Iraq attempted to confirm and express through military means the political strength which they felt their numbers and cohesiveness warranted, but which had never been fully recognized in Baghdad.

Iraq, somewhat larger than the state of California, covers an area of approximately 171,000 square miles. It is bounded on the north by Turkey, on the east by Iran, on the west by Syria and Jordan, and on the south by Kuwait and Saudi Arabia; however, since it has access to the Persian Gulf, it is not a landlocked country. The northern border of Iraq, though rugged terrain, is close enough to the U.S.S.R. for that area to have once served as a sanctuary for Barzani and his followers after an earlier unsuccessful effort to establish an independent Kurdish state, the Republic of Mahabad, in northern Iran in 1946.

Topography and Climate in Iraqi Kurdistan

The fighting in the early 1960's was confined to the predominantly Kurdish northeast sector of Iraq. The north of this sector is characterized by high mountains, broken occasionally by fertile valleys of varying size, those around Suleimaniya being very broad. Toward the south of the area, the mountains give way to wide plains around the cities of Mosul, Arbil, and Kirkuk.

Arbitrarily traced through the northernmost, barely accessible, mountain crescent are the boundaries with Iran and Turkey. Outside the plains and valleys, passage is difficult, impeded by the rugged mountains and deep gorges. There are few roads, particularly in the center of the region, and many of those that exist are natural targets for ambush. Several of the towns and cities are located at the foot of encircling ranges, from which the rebels could observe troop movements and command access to the towns.

Though Iraq as a whole has well-defined summer and winter seasons, Iraqi Kurdistan constitutes a fairly distinct climatic zone. Rainfall is greatest in this area, the city of Mosul having the highest average rainfall of the entire country. There is snow every year, and in January snow often covers the mountains above 3,500 feet. During the course of the rebellion, government troops, unused to the cold, halted ground activities in the winter; and the insurgents took the opportunity to consolidate their position and prepare for spring offensives.

Ethnic and Cultural Separation of Kurds and Arabs

Estimates of the Kurdish population in this area of the world vary so greatly as to be almost meaningless. The Kurds estimated their own numbers at about 12 million in 1962, a figure which included Syria, Turkey, Iran, and the U.S.S.R., as well as Iraq. Estimates of the number of Kurds in Iraq alone ranged from 800,000 to more than 2 million in 1961; informed foreign sources placed the number somewhere between 1.2 million and 1.9 million.¹ Of a total Iraqi population of about 7 million in 1961, the Kurds thus constituted an important ethnic minority, the largest of several, some of which lived in the same area as the Kurds. Except for an unknown number living in the south and Baghdad, the Kurds are overwhelmingly concentrated in the four northern provinces. Within this region, the area between the cities of Mosul and Kirkuk and in the valley of Sulaimaniya Province is relatively densely settled; settlement thins out toward the northeast. Mosul and Kirkuk, the second and third largest cities in Iraq, are heavily Kurdish; Kirkuk, like Arbil, is predominantly so. Sulaimaniya is almost exclusively Kurdish and has long been a seat of Kurdish nationalist sentiment.²

The great majority of Kurds were tribally organized farmers and herdsmen. Tribal ties were strongest in the mountains, weaker in the plains, and virtually broken among city Kurds, a social factor which had a mixed effect on the insurgency. Animosity between tribes divided the Kurds, and for this reason Kurdish support for Barzani was not complete. At the same time, these animosities were the catalyst which triggered the revolt. An additional complicating factor was the conflict between tribal and urban elements; intellectual urban Kurds regarded the tribal Kurds as, in Marxist terms, anachronistic feudal elements. Tribal loyalties, on the other hand, greatly facilitated the recruitment and organization of the armed rebel forces, and the tribal values of courage, endurance, and virility supported a high morale.³

The Kurds are culturally distinct from their Arab countrymen. They speak several dialects of Kurdish, an Indo-European language related to Persian—although many urban Kurds also speak Arabic—and they claim a separate literary and cultural heritage. Rural Kurds wear a distinctive costume of baggy trousers, shirt, wide sash, and turban. One of the major Kurdish grievances was the lack of instruction in their own language in the schools and universities. A common religion, Islam, constitutes the Kurds' only bond with their Arab neighbors. As Sunni Muslims, whose tribal leaders often hold both religious and political authority, the Kurds hold a balance of religious power between the Muslim Arabs, who are roughly divided between Sunni and Shiite adherents. Kurdish support enables the Arab Sunnites to justify their historical monopoly of political and economic power in the country.⁴

The distinction between Kurds and Arabs, accentuated by the geographical concentration of the Kurds in the north of Iraq, has hindered their assimilation into a single Iraqi nationalism and bred Kurdish distrust and animosity towards what has been viewed as an alien government. The suspicion was mutual, and it seemed that the Kurdish streak of independence contributed to the unwillingness of the Arab majority to place Kurds in prominent political and administrative positions—a situation which, in turn, fed Kurdish hostility. The more vigorously the Kurds pressed their demands, the more untrustworthy they probably appeared to the Arabs. This interplay was, and still seems to be, beyond the ability or willingness of the central government to change.

A Background of Revolt

Next to their status as a discontented ethnic minority, the most significant factor contributing to the outbreak and growth of insurgency among the Kurds was their long history of efforts to enjoy some form of autonomy. In the 20th century, this history included a brief period, in 1918, of British-supported Kurdish government in part of the area; recognition of Kurdish autonomy and even independence in the 1920 Treaty of Sèvres; Kurdish revolts in the 1930's and 1940's; and the attempted establishment, with Soviet sponsorship, of the Kurdish Republic of Mahabad in 1946. These efforts were made less because of any precise definition of autonomy per se than because of Kurdish dislike for central rule by either Turks or Arabs. It is likely that from these successive experiences and their concomitants of broken promises and unfulfilled guarantees, the Kurds learned to beware of negotiations and agreements unless they were supported by concrete acts.

Economic Factors in the Insurgency

Economic conditions were in one sense fundamental to the development of the insurgency. The main thrust of economic development in Iraq was felt outside Iraqi Kurdistan, and Kurds felt that the government's expenditure for development and public services in the north had not been

equitable. Although major dams had been built in the area, their purpose was as much to improve water control and irrigation in the south as it was to benefit the Kurds. Despite the potential of the area, the Kurdish farmer and herdsman lived in a relative economic backwater, generally cut off from the commercial market. This situation, aggravated by the economic blockade imposed by the central government after the insurgency broke out, contributed indirectly to the insurgency since villagers had little to lose by turning over their produce to the rebel army.⁵ On the other hand, the Kurdish population was relatively prosperous in that the land was fertile, water was plentiful, and the principle of individual land ownership was more widely established than in the south.

Perhaps the most important economic factor was the presence in the Kurdish area around Kirkuk and Mosul of the country's largest oilfields. One of the Kurdish demands was to gain possessive rights over the fields and a greater share of oil revenues, but the central government, overwhelmingly dependent on oil income, was reluctant even to consider such an arrangement. At the same time, the government must have been aware of the vulnerability of oil operations to rebel activities—a vulnerability which the insurgents were happy to demonstrate on more than one occasion.*

Political Isolation of Kurds

From 1925 until 1958, the Iraqi national government was a constitutional monarchy; in 1958, after a violent revolution, the monarchy was replaced by a republic governed under a constitution. However, neither "republic" nor "constitutional monarchy" accurately described the political system of Iraq. Actual control rested in the hands of a few men who dominated the scene on the basis of personal leadership rather than programs and issues. Successive governments were strongly authoritarian and repressive, and government and politics had long been the province of Arabs in Baghdad.

The Kurds, isolated politically from the government, had little voice in either their own provincial affairs or in the decisions of the administration in Baghdad. Although it was customary for the government to appoint one or two Kurds to the cabinet (usually as ministers without portfolio or ministers of Kurdish affairs), the Kurds either did not regard these appointees as truly representative or else considered their positions to reflect Arab condescension rather than real political concession.

Town and city Kurds chafed under the discrimination imposed upon them by their minority status. In a society where the population was largely rural, conservative, and tribally oriented

⁵The rebels periodically sabotaged installations of the Iraq Petroleum Company. In August 1962, an oil pipeline was blown up and, in August and November 1962, two oil technicians were abducted, to be released a few weeks later with gifts.

and where middle and working classes scarcely existed, educated urban Kurds were particularly sensitive and vulnerable. Limited by their own very narrow political base, the young Kurdish intellectuals could have expressed their political aspirations best through state or state-controlled institutions; but they were barred from posts of administrative responsibility and political power in the central, and even provincial, government.

Kurdish Military Experience in Iraqi Army

The isolation of the Kurds, however, did not extend to the military sphere. The same characteristics of tribal Kurds that made them excellent guerrilla fighters had long qualified them for service in the national army. Estimates of the proportion of Kurds in the armed forces and police ranged as high as one-third, although they were seldom promoted to the higher staff-officer levels. Service in the army was considered a desirable occupation. Regular soldiers were apparently viewed as distinct from Kurdish mercenaries (or *jash*, meaning "jackass") who were hired by the central government or who joined it because of tribal animosities and were then used in action against their own people.

During the insurgency, several thousand Kurds of all ranks were to defect to the rebel side, bringing skills in communications and logistics, military materiel, and intelligence; others who remained in the army passed on intelligence or acted as intermediaries during periods of negotiation.

Political Factors Underlying the Insurgency

Before the 1958 revolution, Iraqi politics presented both stable and unstable aspects. Despite many changes in government, a limited number of people had continued to share power throughout. The overt political interests they represented tended to counterbalance each other, and politics dealt mainly with disputes within an already established elite. On the other hand, instability was evident in the number of groups, whose membership continued to grow, which were outside the political system, and in the severely repressive measures which the elite felt it needed to take against even the mildest opposition. These groups, some of them represented in political parties, shared an opposition to the pro-Western orientation of the elite, which they felt had isolated Iraq from the rest of the Arab world. Many also shared a vague desire to reform the political, social, and economic institutions of the country, including the oppressive and unproductive land-tenure system. Dominating these groups were young, educated Arabs, including officers in the Iraqi armed forces.

In 1958 Brig. Abdul Karim Kassem succeeded in organizing sufficient support within the armed forces to overthrow the government and the monarchy. The new government, headed by Kassem, was organized in a period of great expectations and was originally popular because of its program of social and economic reforms and its efforts to re-establish ties with the Arab

world. After around 1960, however, the regime became increasingly repressive, its energies directed more and more to securing Kassem's position as "Sole Leader." Kassem's own political base was narrow. He retained great popularity among the poor, but this support was not organized. Having permitted new, energetic groups into the political system, he attempted to maintain his position by playing one group off against the other, including the Communists. He tried to ensure the loyalty of the armed forces by increasing their material benefits.

Almost from the very beginning of his regime, however, Kassem succeeded in alienating the very elements that had supported his revolution. A running dispute with Nasser of Egypt turned Pan-Arab nationalists against him; one of the first to go was Col. Abdul Salam Muhammed Aref, a leader in the 1958 revolution. Armed forces support for Kassem was considerably weakened when, after an uprising instigated in Mosul by nationalist army officers in March 1959, Kassem purged the army of hundreds of officers. Having legitimized the Communist party, Kassem turned against it when its power appeared to become too great; and it too became an enemy. It was against this background of growing political instability that the Kurdish insurgency broke out in 1961. The unsuccessful handling of the campaign against the Kurds augmented forces leading to Kassem's downfall less than two years after hostilities began.

INSURGENCY

The Kurdish rebellion of 1961-64 passed through a series of political and military phases in response to the varying policies of the central government in Baghdad. The period preceding military hostilities, from Barzani's return from exile in September 1958 to March 1961, was characterized by fruitless Kurdish efforts to obtain various concessions from the Kassem government. The military phase of the insurgency may be divided into two separate but overlapping stages. The first, beginning in the late spring of 1961, was the consolidation of Barzani's position against rival Kurdish tribes supporting the government—the Rakani, Zibari, and Barwari tribes in the northwest, and the Bradost, Harki, and Lolani tribes in the northeast. By mid-1962, these tribal enemies had been defeated; some were driven from the country, others fled to Kurdish cities under Iraqi military protection, and some joined Barzani.

Kurds Gain Early Military Success

Hostilities between the Kurds and the Iraqi army—the second stage—broke out on September 10, 1961, although Barzani and Kurdish party leaders did not decide to fight until a week later. Barzani himself was apparently reluctant to fight at that particular time, but was obviously unable to restrain the Kurds involved in the September clash.⁷

By the end of the summer of 1962, Kurdish forces, at the height of their military success, had established control over virtually the whole of the Kurdish area of Iraq. This success

capped a series of small tactical victories extending from the area in Zakho in the northwest during the winter of 1961-62, through the northeast in April-June 1962, and then rapidly in a great arc south from Rawanduz to the Tigris River in July and August 1962. Caught and immobilized in this arc was a large part of the Iraqi army. With winter came a slowdown in the pace of hostilities, and the Kurds employed the period to consolidate their positions around the major cities of Suleimaniya, Kirkuk, Arbil, and Khanequin, all of which they avoided occupying.⁸

Reactions of Kurds and Arabs to the Revolt

By the end of 1962, most of the Kurdish population supported Barzani—a far larger proportion than any previous leader had been able to organize. This active support had developed from a very modest beginning and from very disparate sources. Although sentiment for autonomy was widespread, it was undirected until Barzani was able, after hostilities broke out, to give it positive content as a national uprising. Yet Kurdish nationalism alone does not seem sufficient to account for the wide support given the rebellion. Kurdish views on nationalism tended to vary widely, and nationalism was certainly not strong enough to overcome the hostility of several large Kurdish tribes toward Barzani. The process of uniting the Kurds behind Barzani was greatly accelerated when government forces unleashed indiscriminate terror raids against the population.

Some Arab support, though largely a function of politics in Baghdad, was also evident: as dissatisfaction with the Kassem regime grew, so did support for the rebel demands. A high point was reached in April 1962, when Barzani issued a public declaration that his aim was not full independence but autonomy within the Iraqi nation. A few days later, a statement was signed by several prominent Arab Iraqi leaders supporting the demands. Most Arabs, however, undoubtedly continued to regard the Kurds as rebellious bandits, and strongly Pan-Arab nationalists accused Kassem of being too soft on the Kurds.⁹

The Kurdish Support Base Is Divided

Aside from incipient nationalist sentiment, reaction against government attacks on noncombatants, and the positive response to Barzani's military success, the Kurdish rebellion was supported by the tribal and political party bases upon which the insurgency was organized. These two sources of support represented inherently hostile elements: on the one hand, the traditional tribal structure and, on the other, the intellectual urban Kurds who made up the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iraq (KDP).

Unable to agree in peacetime, the tribal Kurds and the KDP worked together when faced with a common enemy; but, even during the rebellion, it was difficult for the two elements to consummate politically their military success and to articulate precisely their demands. In fact, the division between the tribal Kurds and the KDP inhibited full KDP support for the

insurgency until it was well into its first year. Once the party was committed, however, it helped to swell popular Kurdish support for the rebellion, extending what had been a tribal affair to the cities and to the urban population, among whom tribal ties were weak.

Weaknesses of the Kurdish Democratic Party

The relative weakness and hesitancy of the political arm of the rebellion, the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iraq (KDP), may be explained by its history and its early association with the Communist party. Little information is available on the structure of the KDP, the extent of its membership, and its organization. Established in 1946 and composed mainly of young, urban, educated Kurds, the party was undoubtedly narrowly based. Its first and only chairman up through the revolt was Barzani, who was chosen for his leadership, extending back to the 1930's, of the Kurdish nationalist movement. Party activities, however, were initiated and controlled mainly by the secretary general, Ibrahim Ahmed, and later by a prominent party officer, Jelial Talabani, both urbanized Kurds. Barzani apparently accorded little respect or support to Ahmed, although his relations with Talabani appeared cordial. The party languished during Barzani's 12-year exile in the U. S. S. R. following the collapse of the Kurdish Republic of Mahabad in 1946. Even after his return to Iraq in 1958, Barzani concerned himself little with party affairs, except the most critical decisions regarding relations with the central government and Communist influence.

The KDP had a central committee and politburo—terms conveniently adopted from Communist political terminology—and apparently maintained or supported various ancillary organizations such as the Kurdish Women's Federation and the Kurdish Students' Federation. The narrow base of the party and the mutual distrust with which traditional tribal leaders and party figures viewed each other were major weaknesses, as was Barzani's indifference toward, even contempt for, party politics. Other weaknesses arose from the Communist influence in the party and the sometimes hesitant efforts of the party to free itself from this influence.

Relationship of the Communist Party to the Kurdish Revolt and the KDP

From the time of its formation, the KDP and its leaders had maintained relations, generally opportunistic, with the Communist party.¹⁰ This association was based mainly on the participation of the KDP and its smaller predecessors in the attempt to establish, with Soviet support, the Kurdish Republic of Mahabad in neighboring Iran. For much of the 1950's, a separate and relatively strong pro-Communist wing existed in the party. By mid-1959, however, Barzani himself intervened to remove the principal pro-Communist leader, and the KDP initiated efforts to establish contact with other national parties.

The interests of the Communist Party of Iraq, a national party largely Arab in its membership, lay primarily in Baghdad; and its support for the Kurds varied, depending largely on its

relations with the central government. Upon coming to power in 1958, General Kassam had permitted the Communist party to emerge from underground, and his relationship with the party was alternately cordial and hostile as he found it useful and threatening. Even though the Communists fell from favor after 1959, they maintained tenuous ties with the regime. Kassam occasionally harassed them, but he was generally restrained by his unwillingness to risk offending the Soviet Union, which supported his regime, and by his own changing political needs. By 1959 it was clear that the Communist party would not extend consistent support to Kurdish efforts.

At the same time, its past ambiguous association with the Communists hampered the KDP in its efforts to mend relations with other national parties after 1959. The KDP, moreover, remained committed to an outlook and political program usually attributed to the Communist party; KDP leaders saw this as necessary if they were to compete successfully with the Communists for the young Kurdish intellectuals. Indeed, Marxist views prevented the KDP from devoting itself wholeheartedly to the insurgency, initially under tribal leadership, until well into 1962. Once having committed itself, however, the KDP began a slow and difficult reorientation to the right as its leaders adjusted themselves to the reality of having to work with tribal authorities. The process was by no means complete, however, and undoubtedly there remained within the KDP many Communist sympathizers.

Kurdish Underground Activities

Although the KDP maintained a form of underground organization, the insurgency did not pass through an initial stage of underground resistance. When guerrilla warfare broke out, the existing underground assisted in various ways. Its activities included collection of funds and arms, provision of medical supplies, recruitment of doctors, support of guerrilla dependents, and propaganda activities. The Kurdish newspaper, Khabat, continued to be published clandestinely during the insurgency after being formally suppressed by Kassam. On the other hand, there was at first little organized foreign propaganda, except that occasionally undertaken in Lausanne, Switzerland, by the Committee for the Defense of the Rights of the Kurdish People, an organization only indirectly related to the KDP. Barzani himself reportedly made the first efforts to get foreign correspondents into the Kurdish area. The initial support activities of the KDP were in general modest or ineffective. Medical support and funds were never adequate.

Barzani criticized the failure of the KDP in this regard,* although most of the activities which the party did undertake could not have been carried out by the tribal organization. During 1963 the party's efforts became increasingly effective, not only in the collection of arms and ammunition and in the training of raw urban recruits who joined the guerrillas in increasing numbers, but also in the extension of a form of political organization in the villages and towns

* According to Schmidt, the almost complete lack of medical care was one of Barzani's major complaints against the KDP.

under insurgent control through the election of councils and the appointment of administrative officers. Moreover, after its slow start, which contrasted sharply with the determined and singleminded military operations of the tribal guerrillas, the KDP gradually strengthened and enlarged its own military forces and expanded the scope of their activities.

Kurdish Guerrilla Organization and Leadership

The guerrilla forces were organized into three regional commands, corresponding to the northwest, southeast, and central regions of Iraqi Kurdistan. These commands also reflected social and political realities. The northwest command, covering a tribal region, was based on tribal forces organized into tribal units. The southeast command, encompassing an area where tribal organization was weak or nonexistent, was organized around the KDP, and its units drew heavily on young volunteers from towns and cities. The central command combined both these elements, and, possibly for this reason, was directly under Barzani's guidance. Within the commands were subcommands, whose leaders were ranked according to the number of men under their control; distinctions were maintained between officers, noncoms, and privates.

The character of the guerrilla army was set initially by its tribal and mixed tribal units. The tribal forces bore the brunt of the fighting. The hard core of the tribal force was the Pej Merga (To The Death), composed largely of partisans of the Barzani family and its associated tribes, who had fought previously with Barzani in Mahabad. The principal military leaders were, with a single notable exception, tribal figures. Barzani himself was the military leader of the Barzani family and its associated tribes. The first of his commanders, Assad Hoshewi, from one of the associated tribes, was a long-time comrade in arms and commanded the northwest third of the Kurdish forces. Another leading military figure, Abbas Mamand Agha, was chief of the Ako tribe, the largest in the central region. The exception was Jelal Talabani, an officer of the KDP and a former editor of *Khabat*, who commanded the southeast forces and helped organize party support for the rebellion.¹¹ As the insurgency proceeded, an overall military organization was developed, although Barzani generally gave his commanders wide discretion.

Kurdish Strength, Recruitment, and Training

Kurdish strength fluctuated. In September 1961, according to Barzani's account, his original force numbered between 7,000 and 8,000. By mid-1962, there were between 15,000 and 20,000 active guerrillas, including about 4,500 Pej Merga. In addition there was an armed rotating reserve, the members of which were called up for six months' service; and an emergency reserve, the members of which could be called up for a few days' service by local commanders, but normally remained in their villages.¹²

Recruitment seems to have presented few problems among the tribal units. Those formed by Talabani and the KDP, however, apparently had greater difficulties in the early stages of the

revolt. These units did not have the advantages inherent in tribal organization, and it was more difficult for an urban volunteer to leave his family than for a tribesman. By 1964, however, Talabani claimed to have organized some 9,000 men into battalions, and press reports indicated that an increasing proportion of new recruits were city Kurds. As rebel successes mounted, the rebellion attracted increasing numbers of deserters from the government side.* By the end of the summer of 1962, the Kurds estimated some 3,000 army and police deserters had joined the rebels, an estimate which was increased to 8,000 a year later.¹³

Little training and indoctrination were required for the tribal units. The tribesmen generally were excellent marksmen, accustomed to the rough and mobile life required by guerrilla operations. Members of the Pej Merga had had previous battle experience, some as early as the 1930's. The KDP units, on the other hand, had virtually no previous military experience, and their military achievements were correspondingly less noteworthy.

Logistics: Supplies, Weapons, and Funding

Generally, recruits were expected to bring with them their own equipment, clothing, and arms, which the command then replaced or supplemented as necessary. Tribesmen wore the familiar Kurdish national costume, and its usual whites, browns, and greys blended well with the surrounding countryside, a useful camouflage against air attack. There were no insignia, although members of the Barzani and related tribes wore red-checked turbans as a distinguishing feature. Talabani's forces, on the other hand, adopted a khaki uniform. By 1964, the forces were assuming a more military and less tribal aspect, in part because of the presence of a number of former officers and troops of the Iraqi army, and in part because of the growing number of urban recruits.

Compared with government forces, the guerrillas were poorly armed. They possessed only light weapons and equipment—no armored transport, heavy guns or artillery, tanks, or aircraft. Because the Kurds depended heavily on captured ammunition, the most practical weapons, though not necessarily the most highly esteemed, were Soviet and British arms used by Iraqi army and police. The Czech Brno rifle, a favorite for its long-range accuracy, was also one of the most difficult to supply with ammunition, since it was used by neither the Iraqi nor the neighboring Iranian forces. Though less well armed than the government forces, the insurgents were also less burdened by heavy equipment and its logistical and support requirements, and they compensated for their disadvantages in armament by mobility and marksmanship.¹⁴

Logistical problems were eased by the limited requirements of guerrilla operations. The rebels, though they ate well, lived off the land, a practice that did not appear to be unduly onerous for the villagers. The Mosul area in northwest Iraq, where Barzani first launched his attacks

*On the other hand, the Kurdish rebels also estimated that, by the end of 1963, some 3,000 to 4,000 Kurds were still fighting on the government's side.

against government forces, was chosen because it was one of the richer Kurdish provinces. Thereafter, as the revolt spread to the east and south, the villagers either donated the necessary food or set aside a portion of their produce for the insurgents.¹⁵ Sometimes cash was paid for the food. Of needed support, the insurgents most often lacked cash funds and medical assistance.

Such funds as were obtained came from the occasional capture of army or police payrolls, from KDP collections among Kurds in the south, and from wealthy Kurdish businessmen and landlords, who were expected to contribute. Few fixed bases were maintained, since Barzani was almost continually on the move. As the rebellion progressed, caves were converted into small arsenals of captured weapons, armories, sewing and repair shops, camps for the few prisoners kept by the insurgents, rest areas for the wounded, and storehouses for less perishable food supplies. Such caves, scattered throughout the mountainous regions, also housed villagers and refugees who fled air attack by day to return at night to complete their chores in the valleys.

Intelligence and Tactics

The Kurds were aided by good intelligence and counterintelligence work. With 50 or so captured wireless radio sets, they were able to monitor communications within the Iraqi forces, using defected signal corps specialists to break government codes. The information gained in this way provided the Kurdish commands with excellent and up-to-date military intelligence. Information acquired through monitored broadcasts, together with that obtained from deserters and KDP intelligence sources, contributed immeasurably to the guerrillas' success. For their part, the Kurds took extraordinary precautions to ensure the secrecy of their operations, fearing that even friendly villagers might inadvertently betray their plans.

The guerrillas' tactics, well suited to their capabilities, tended to offset the advantages the Iraqi forces derived from their air superiority. Limited almost completely to travel on foot, the rebels nevertheless moved with considerable speed over long distances. Deception and ambush were used with consistent success. Except in a few major engagements, the rebels operated in small, dispersed groups, and usually at night; and they generally avoided camping in villages. Their tactics were aimed at achieving control over the countryside and transportation routes, surrounding and isolating the major garrisoned towns and cities, and raiding outlying police and army posts. No attempt was made to occupy urban areas or to cut off completely the flow of supplies into them. By this forbearance, the rebels protected the Kurdish city populations from aerial bombardment, which would probably have occurred if the cities had been under rebel control, and at the same time burdened the government forces with administrative duties. The insurgents, however, demonstrated their control in other ways—by an occasional siege, by entering the towns for supplies, by interfering with subsidiary oil pipelines and abducting oil technicians, and by blocking roads and railroads.

There is no accurate account of rebel losses or of civilian casualties resulting from bombings. Barzani estimated that for every rebel loss, the government suffered 40, and accounts of individual skirmishes suggest that the rebels invariably suffered fewer casualties. * Indiscriminate retaliatory bombing of villages by the government, however, resulted in a relatively high toll among civilians.

Kurds Define and Promote Their Political Demands

Barzani and the KDP leaders shared the task of interrelating military and political moves during the insurgency. Such coordination was probably difficult, given the great difference in outlook between the two elements and Barzani's relative indifference to party affairs. Although party leaders apparently recognized their dependence on Barzani and the tribal forces, Barzani seemed less aware of the party's role in the rebellion. In general, through a mixture of indifference and design, Barzani left to the party leaders a large part of the responsibility for initiating discussions with the central government and for contacting major political groups in Baghdad. On the other hand, Barzani and Talabani clashed over the political advisability of establishing contact with the Egyptian government.

The KDP appears to have taken the lead in formulating in more precise terms the rebel demands on the central government. The overall demand was not for full independence but for government recognition of a Kurdish "right" to autonomy within the Iraqi nation. For most Kurds, possibly even including Barzani, the demand for autonomy needed no further elaboration. The term encompassed a variety of sometimes conflicting hopes and aims—the right to use the Kurdish language in the schools, the resurgence of Kurdish culture, escape from central rule and taxes, strengthening of tribal authority, economic development and modernization, responsible positions in the government and administration for educated Kurds. The Kurds insisted on a "fair share" of oil revenues and elimination of all but Kurdish forces in the north, although these would remain under Baghdad command. A local legislative council and provincial executive were to be filled by Kurdish appointees. As these aims were finally defined, they amounted to demands for Kurdish self-government in all matters except national defense and foreign policy.

Kurds Set Preconditions on Negotiations But Keep Open the Door

Furthermore, the Kurds set two important conditions. The first was that negotiations were contingent on the government's recognition of the Kurdish "right" to autonomy. Discussions with the central government rarely progressed beyond consideration of this demand, with the government raising all kinds of semantic barriers. The second condition was made in the spring

* Estimates of total casualties vary widely, but are generally agreed that rebel losses were far fewer than government losses.

of 1962, when Barzani publicly demanded that Kassem reform his "Incompetent dictatorship." Whatever Kassem may have thought of the other Kurdish demands, he was obviously incapable of meeting this one. Barzani's statement appeared, indeed, to indicate that he had given up attempting to negotiate with the regime, apparently preferring instead to concentrate on achieving an overwhelming military success which would speak for itself.¹⁰

The insurgents avoided acts that might bar their eventual reintegration into the Iraqi state and established no formal diplomatic ties with other nations. However, several contacts of potential significance were made. Between October 1960 and March 1961, shortly before the outbreak of the rebellion, Barzani had revisited the U. S. S. R. to attend Soviet national festivities and may have obtained some promise of support at that time; but there is nothing in subsequent events to indicate that any was received or even expected. Limited support was apparently obtained from the Kurds in Iran and Turkey, particularly in easing transportation and communication to the outside world. Between February and June 1963, when negotiations for a political settlement were being conducted with the central government, Talabani twice visited Egypt, and there are indications that he received a sympathetic hearing. Iraq's relations with other regional Arab states, notably Syria and Egypt, implied for the Kurds a larger framework in which they had to operate; and Talabani, much more than Barzani, appreciated these implications. But there is no evidence that the insurgents received substantial military or financial assistance from other countries.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

The most notable features of the counterinsurgency effort were, first, the instability of the central government and, secondly, a marked consistency in approach, despite this instability. The approach, given the government's unwillingness and inability to deal with the Kurdish problem in a political context, necessarily aimed at the forceful military suppression of the insurgency. Neither Kassem nor his successors, at least until the February 1964 ceasefire, made any real concessions to the insurgent demands. These leaders were certainly aware of the nature of the insurgent goals; but, in turn, each government equivocated or misrepresented or ignored the political aspects of the problem, depending on events in Baghdad and the changing relations between Iraq, Syria, and Egypt to save the situation. Political insecurity made government leaders doubtful of their ability to adjust to a strong and coherent Kurdish state within Iraq—which might lead to possible similar demands from other, though much smaller, ethnic minorities—or to withstand Arab pressures against the emergence of such a Kurdish state.

Past Efforts To Contain the Kurdish Problem

It was not a question of recognizing the rebellion—the Kurdish problem had long been recognized. It was rather a question of what kind of response the central government should make.

Before 1958 the constitutional monarchy had made some very modest progress in dealing with the Kurds. The areas around Kirkuk and Mosul had benefited from the prosperity based on oil production, and the Iraqi Kurds generally had come to realize that their future was tied to the nation. However, the monarchy dealt with the Kurds mainly by maintaining intertribal feuds and preventing the coalescence of Kurdish sentiment around the KDP and the Communist party. Government handling of the Kurds was greatly facilitated by the absence from 1946 to 1958 of Barzani, the only Kurdish leader of sufficient stature to inspire organized action. Characteristically, successive governments earnestly advocated a peaceful settlement of the Kurdish problem, with stress on the peace rather than the settlement, only to revert sooner or later to repressive methods.

In the beginning, General Kassem's relations with the Kurds were cordial. This cordiality may best be explained in terms of the emotional tide of reform and good will that followed Kassem's overthrow of the monarchy in 1958. Kassem was himself part Kurdish, and he titled his new republic a "partnership of Arabs and Kurds," a term incorporated in the new constitution. Iraq's subsequent withdrawal from the Western-oriented Central Treaty Organization was welcomed by the Kurds, who regarded this military alliance between Turkey, Iraq, and Iran (all with Kurdish minorities) as an anti-Kurdish pact. Kassem granted Barzani's request to end his long exile in the U. S. S. R., and on his return the Kurdish leader was accorded a hero's welcome and given luxurious living accommodations in Baghdad. In return, Barzani expressed his loyalty to the new regime, and the Kurds in 1959 helped Kassem to quell a military revolt in Mosul.¹⁷

Iraqi-Kurdish Relations Deteriorate

Relations between the Kurds and Kassem gradually deteriorated. As might have been anticipated, Barzani's return signaled renewed Kurdish efforts to obtain political, cultural, and economic concessions from the government. Resuming his former political role, Barzani undertook to reclaim tribal lands which had been confiscated and redistributed to rival tribes in his absence. Kassem's own initial policies had already raised Kurdish hopes, and the KDP sent several delegations to Baghdad. At this point, several factors combined to cause Kassem to alter his approach to the Kurds. The first was his own increasingly unstable political position, which led him to fear the development of any strong and potentially competitive political element. Moreover, Kassem wished to enforce in the north as well as in the south his authority, taxation policies, and land-reform program, all of which were opposed by tribal leaders.¹⁸

Accompanying these developments was the formation in Baghdad of a subversive Arab movement aimed at the overthrow of the Kassem regime. Traditional national political parties had been rendered almost impotent by Kassem, who simply bypassed them; however, the clandestine Iraqi Ba'ath Party (the Socialist Party of the Arab Renaissance), founded in 1941, grew from a position of relative unimportance in 1958 to substantial strength in 1960 by embracing the growing

number of Arabs disaffected with the regime. The party was a militant amalgam of socialism, anticommunism, and Pan-Arabism, and its leaders were disturbed by Kassem's policies.

The growing strength of Barzani, the invigoration of the KDP, and the expression of Kurdish demands were all undoubtedly regarded as threats by Kassem, concerned as he was over his own political weakness. In the context of his growing hostility to the Communist party after 1959, Kassem may also have feared a close association between the Communists and the KDP. By 1961 he had resorted to the practice employed by his predecessors of exploiting tribal feuds among the Kurds. Tribal clashes, together with highly provocative government troop movements in the north, led to the outbreak of hostilities in the summer of 1961.

Strength and Weaknesses of Iraqi Security Forces

At the onset of the insurgency, the Iraqi army numbered about 60,000 men, organized into five divisions, one armored and four infantry. This strength was less than real: indeed, one infantry division was largely on paper. Another was supposedly designed specifically for mountain combat and was headquartered in Kirkuk, but the extent of its adaptation was the possession of animals for transport through rough terrain. The other two infantry divisions were roughly divided between service in the north and garrison duty in the south. Half the armored division was stationed in Habbaniyah, the other half was used in support of other units. In addition to the regular army, Iraq had about 10,000 police and 7,000 Kurdish mercenaries organized into auxiliary units.

Under Kassem, somewhat over half (30,000 to 40,000) of the troops were employed in the north.¹⁹ The commitment of only half his forces to the campaign reflected Kassem's weakness: he wished to keep a large part of his military resources close to home; also, government forces had been debilitated by the purge of the officer corps after the 1959 military rebellion in Mosul. By 1963 casualties and desertions reduced the number of committed troops, desertions occurring most often among the Kurdish regulars and mercenaries, the troops most qualified for counter-guerrilla warfare in mountainous terrain.

The Army's State of Readiness: Equipment and Training

The army was quite well equipped; about three-fourths of all its material was of recent Soviet origin, including tanks, armored vehicles, and guns up to five inches in caliber. It also had older British equipment. By early 1962 the air force had in operation about a dozen Ilyushin bombers and 40 MIG-15's and MIG-17's, as well as British Venoms, Vampires, Furies, and conventional Hunters; later that year the government acquired 10 TU-16 jet bombers. The bombers operated out of Baghdad, the fighters out of Mosul or Kirkuk.²⁰ The government received considerable external assistance, in the form of material aid, from the U. S. S. R.

Neither the army nor the air force was fully trained in the use of the new Soviet equipment, and much of the equipment itself was not useful outside the plains. The jet aircraft had to be flown too high and fast for close support of ground operations or for pinpoint bombing. The armed forces were, furthermore, not trained to meet the special requirements of antiguerrilla warfare in mountainous terrain, and there is no evidence that the troops were given special training. Again and again they succumbed to precisely the same kind of guerrilla trap or tactic. Casualty rates were high. Morale was understandably low.

Government Tactics and Truce Offers

Troop tactics seemed extraordinarily well designed to alienate the Kurdish population without achieving true military gains. The objective was apparently to deny territorial control and support to the insurgents and to keep open the main communications routes, but the army very quickly found itself trapped in garrisoned towns and cities, forced to devote itself to breaking out of or lifting sieges imposed by the insurgents. Supplying isolated garrisons became the most challenging of missions, for which the troops generally had little initiative. Militarily unsuccessful, the government resorted to continual bombardment of villages and towns. Apparently, they hoped to hit insurgent encampments, but the rebels rarely used populated areas as camps or headquarters. Kassem's economic blockade of the north similarly backfired.

The few positive measures taken by the government were Kassem's several offers of truce, amnesty, and pardon. A number of Kurds reportedly took advantage of the amnesties, on an individual or tribal basis. The government attempted to make propaganda capital of the defections; but, in view of the guerrilla military successes in the summer of 1962, this propaganda fell on deaf ears in Kurdistan. Also, truce offers were often couched as ultimatums and only succeeded in offending Kurdish pride. Even when followed by brief talks, such offers often failed. Considering the Kurds' suspicion of verbal assurances, it is probable that they were unwilling to enter into negotiations until they had achieved an overwhelmingly superior military position from which to bargain.

Kassem Is Overthrown and the New Regime Negotiates With the Kurds

During the last half of 1962, moreover, an important development occurred, of which Kassem was unaware—contact was established between the Kurdish Democratic Party and a group of "free officers" associated with the Ba'ath movement.²¹ Although these contacts were initiated by the "free officers," they represented one of the most notable political achievements of the KDP and offered the Kurds some hope of ultimate success in negotiations with a new Iraqi government. By offering Barzani a possible future alternative to the Kassem regime, these discussions may have justified his earlier decision in the spring of 1962 not to attempt serious negotiations with the government for a settlement. By early 1963 the "free officers" and the Ba'ath movement had

planned a coup to be led by the army and supported by the air force. The most prominent figure in the coup was Abdul Salam Muhammed Aref, Kassem's former partner in the 1958 revolution, whom the Ba'athists intended to use as a figurehead. On February 8, 1963, Kassem was overthrown.

With the appearance of the Ba'ath regime came a new set of factors influencing the counter-insurgency campaign. The first of these was the severe purge conducted by the Ba'athists against the Communist party and the rapid cooling of relations between the new government and the U.S.S.R., which shortly afterward halted military assistance to Iraq. Following these developments, both the Communist party and the U.S.S.R. declared, finally, their full support for the Kurdish insurgency. Many Iraqi Communists fled to the Kurdish area. This support tested the views of the insurgents toward the Communist party, but the KDP apparently stood firm against a resurgence of Communist influence in its ranks. The refugees were given sanctuary, but they were not welcomed into the insurgent armed forces or given positions of political importance.²²

In view of the contact between the KDP and the Ba'ath movement during 1962, the move toward negotiations was almost automatic following Kassem's downfall. Initially, the discussions between the government and the Kurds offered some prospect of success; the government conceded on March 9, as a semantic substitute for autonomy, Kurdish rights based on "decentralization." Very quickly it became apparent, however, that the government did not take the negotiations seriously. The KDP delegation to Baghdad, in which key party members participated, experienced a frustrating series of meetings with official and unofficial government representatives between February and June 1963. The most important of these meetings was the April 24 presentation by the Kurds, headed by Talabani, of memoranda outlining specific Kurdish demands (which the government already knew). On June 9, the government arrested the Kurdish delegation, with the exception of Talabani, who was in Cairo. On June 10 hostilities were resumed.²³

The New Ba'ath Government Resumes Anti-Kurdish Operations

Although there had been incidents which the government employed to justify its changed policy, there seems little question that the Ba'ath government was responsible for the sudden renewal of the fighting. Ba'ath policy, like Kassem's, was apparently influenced by fear of a competitive political element and a desire to assert a single national authority. In some respects, the new government was even less secure than Kassem's: it had no popular mass following, and its own membership was divided between extremist reformers and conservatives and between pro-Nasser and anti-Nasser elements. The extremist, anti-Nasser elements that succeeded in dominating the political coalition by May 1963 had a very narrow base.

Ba'ath policy, moreover, had a special ideological content. Militantly Pan-Arab, Ba'ath leaders refused to entertain any suggestion of Kurdish autonomy. Just as the Kurds feared submersion in a larger Arab federation, so the Ba'athists feared a loss of what they considered Arab territory, particularly oil territory. Moreover, having turned against the Communist party, they feared that an autonomous Kurdistan might be used as a base for Communist subversion. Its self-consciously Arab, almost racist, approach gave the Ba'ath counterinsurgency campaign a distinctive tone. Its reprisals were more vicious and widespread than those of the previous regime, its purpose stronger. With the infusion of new life into the army, troop morale improved briefly and the new regime's initial offensive was comparatively successful.

The Ba'ath Government Makes an All-Out Military Effort To Stamp Out the Kurdish Revolt

The Ba'ath altered somewhat the composition of government forces. Kurdish soldiers still in the government forces were transferred to the south—their special skills largely lost to the northern campaign but their defection also less likely. A national guard was organized. Apparently designed primarily as a counterweight to the regular army, it participated in mopping-up operations in towns and villages. Certain logistical problems developed as Soviet military assistance was reduced and then withdrawn; some aircraft had also been damaged in the coup. However, the new regime received military aid from Great Britain, and noteworthy support came from Syria in the form of a 5,000-man brigade and apparently some aircraft.

Employing some 80 percent of the entire army force against the Kurds,²⁴ the Ba'ath government was at first successful. The largest offensive, in July 1963, was directed toward asserting control over the Rawanduz Gorge, with the aim of dividing the rebel forces in the north and south. From the beginning, the armed forces deliberately turned on civilian targets. The economic blockade was intensified. The conclusion seems inescapable that the Iraqi government was seeking to destroy the Kurdish military capability and national spirit.

Although temporarily successful, even these efforts failed. The insurgents were forced to abandon a large part of the territory gained the previous year,²⁵ particularly in the east-central region; however, they had, by October 1963, recovered the initiative and looked forward to the winter when they could reinforce their positions and prepare for a spring offensive. By February 1964, a year after the coup, the government had lost control over the areas regained the previous June and July.²⁶ The army was again on the defensive, trapped as before in garrisoned islands. It was reported that even around the large Kurdish cities, troops seldom ventured out without a large convoy with tanks, and rarely at night.²⁷

A New Coup Brings in a New President and New Negotiations

Meanwhile, like its predecessor, the extremist Ba'ath regime was undermined in Baghdad, and for somewhat similar reasons. The government had taken on too many enemies at the same

time: the Communists, the Kurds, and President Nasser of Egypt. The leader of the November 18, 1963, coup that followed, ousting the Ba'ath extremists, was again Abdul Salam Muhammed Aref, who was noteworthy for being able in the space of a few months to negotiate with the Kurds, authorize the bitterly fought 1963 campaign against them, head the new Ba'athist government, and conspire against it.

The coup weakened the military vigor of the counterinsurgency campaign. Army units were withdrawn southward, sacrificing military strength in the north. Moreover, since several key military figures were involved in the political maneuvering in Baghdad, their military duties probably suffered. There followed an indecisive period in which the Kurds, taking advantage of government weakness, consolidated their hold over the north.*

Again the government had an opportunity to negotiate with the Kurdish insurgents, and again the rebels were in a strong military position from which to bargain. A second round of negotiations, coinciding with an offer by President Nasser of Egypt to arbitrate the dispute, was begun, with tribal as well as party leaders participating in the discussions.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

Hostilities between the new government and the rebels were ended on February 10, 1964, by two cease-fire statements issued by Barzani and President Aref. For his part, Aref, who had strengthened his position against the Ba'ath extremists and was busy mending Iraq's relations with Egypt, was apparently prepared to discuss the question of Kurdish rights. The government's cease-fire statement included a reference to the "national rights of the Kurds within one Iraqi national unity," an amnesty for political prisoners, and a promise to undertake reconstruction measures in the north. This last promise was amplified later to include certain economic development projects.

Political Success Still Eludes the Kurds

But the Kurds were to be disappointed again. The crux of the problem stemmed from certain secret clauses that were not signed. These spelled out additional conditions to be met by the government before the insurgents laid down their arms, including the withdrawal of all but the mountain infantry division from Kurdistan and the working out of a definition of Kurdish rights. The government, however, was unwilling to proceed on the basis of these clauses, although at the same time it expected the insurgents to disarm.²⁸

After twice bringing their military efforts to a successful conclusion, at least in the geographical area of Iraqi Kurdistan to which they were confined, the Kurds had the greatest

*Some reports give the Kurds an even greater area than they had before their setback in the summer of 1963.

difficulty in translating this success into political terms at the negotiating table. By March 1964, the insurgents had still not obtained the clear, written, signed, and published agreements for which they longed and which their past experience had taught them to demand. The prospects for another indefinite period of vaguely defined government responses to Kurdish demands were excellent.

One of the Kurds' difficulties was, clearly, having to deal with successive governments that were unwilling to negotiate with them as equals, much less as military victors. The insurgents gained nothing at the conference table, except a period of quiet which they could use to rest, to resupply, to rearm, and to tighten their political control over the Kurdish area. The government, by perhaps deliberately misreading what was an informal agreement preceding the cease-fire announcements, proved itself more adept at the bargaining table than Barzani or the KDP. At the same time, Aref succeeded in pushing onto the insurgents the responsibility for the next move. These matters stood from March 1964 to March 1965.

Relative Strength of the Government and the Kurds

Each side to the dispute—the insurgents and the central government—possessed strengths and weaknesses. The Kurdish insurgents had achieved a notable military victory, which they had followed up with political organization throughout the area they controlled. The stalemate, involving such a large proportion of the nation's population and area, was more intolerable for the central government than for the rebels; and this was the basis of the Kurds' bargaining power as they sought recognition of their "state's rights."

But theirs was an ethnic revolt and lacked genuine popular support outside Kurdistan. Furthermore, if they attempted to abandon purely guerrilla operations and to assert formal political control over the large Kurdish towns and cities, they would expose the inhabitants to retaliatory bombing attacks. The degree to which they could take advantage of their ability to disrupt oil operations was limited by their reluctance to antagonize directly the Western interests represented in the oil company. The insurgent response was thus dependent on many factors, including political developments in Baghdad and perhaps mediation by a foreign power.

Equally important to the Kurdish position were political events in Kurdistan itself and, possibly, a loss of revolutionary momentum. Within the insurgent movement, there remained the basic conflict between party and tribal elements. The KDP, including Talabani, were reportedly unhappy—more so than Barzani—with the cease-fire arrangements. But it is doubtful whether the party, without Barzani's leadership and his tribal resources, would have been able to initiate a more forceful approach to resolving the impasse. A resolution of this conflict was left pending until a settlement had been reached with the central government; its very postponement, however, allowed the government to take advantage of Kurdish disharmony.

For its part, the central government had suffered a resounding military defeat in Iraqi Kurdistan, although it retained the ultimate advantage of air superiority. The clear lesson to be drawn from its experience was the failure of purely military and purely conventional efforts against guerrillas operating in familiar terrain and with the support of the local population. The chronic instability of the central government was, of course, another great weakness. Instability, however, seems to have been much less responsible for the government's failure to defeat the Kurds in the north than its relatively consistent choice of military suppression as the only tactic and its poor military skills in this type of combat. Political instability, moreover, did not appear to be a weakness at the bargaining table. A major strength of the government, despite its military failure, was simply its refusal to negotiate seriously with the Kurds.

A New Round Starts

It was conceivable that such a stalemate could have been prolonged indefinitely. The government certainly had reason to believe that time would exacerbate the internal differences among the Kurds and might well work in its favor. On the other hand, it had to consider that time might also operate against the tribal organization and in favor of the KDP: young, enthusiastic, and increasingly strong, the party could well become a more formidable political opponent. It was perhaps this reasoning that led the government to resume hostilities in April 1965, the date of this writing.

A resolution of the Kurdish problem in Iraq may well involve issues that transcend the boundaries of the state. The possibility exists that Kurdish leaders may declare complete political independence in any area they control militarily, sever their ties to Iraq, and seek to engage support from a major external power. In view of its past ties to the Communists, the KDP might consider calling on the Soviet Union for support, although its present leaders would probably be very reluctant to take such a step. Their experience has taught them the limitations which such support could well impose. They are undoubtedly also aware that Soviet support would be conditional upon Soviet relations with Iraq and with the Arab world in general. It is thus within the context of the Arab states, and particularly through the influence of Nasser of Egypt and his relationship with politicians in Baghdad, that a final resolution of the Kurdish problem seems to lie.

In the event that external influences do not operate to the advantage of the Kurds, the central government of Iraq will again have to choose between accommodating Kurdish demands or eliminating through military force any future expression of the Kurdish problem.

NOTES

¹Dana Adams Schmidt, Journey Among Brave Men (Boston, Toronto: Little, Brown and Co., 1964), p. 8; William Eagleton, The Kurdish Republic of 1964 (London, New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 38.

²George L. Harris et al., Iraq: Its People, Its Society, Its Culture (New Haven: Human Relations Area Files, 1958), pp. 33, 36-44.

³Ibid., passim; Lettie M. Wenner, "Arab-Kurdish Rivalries in Iraq," Middle East Journal, XVII (1963), 68-72; and Schmidt, Journey, passim. The best, though very long, description in English of Kurdish political development and its roots in tribal organization and urban society is contained in an unpublished doctoral dissertation by Wadie Jwaideh, "The Kurdish Nationalist Movement: Its Origins and Developments" (Syracuse University, 1960).

⁴Harris et al., Iraq, pp. 51-61.

⁵Schmidt, Journey, p. 65.

⁶Ibid., p. 70.

⁷Ibid., pp. 77-78; Derk Kinnane, The Kurds and Kurdistan (London, New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 64-65, suggests that the first major encounter between government and tribal forces occurred in June. Regardless of the date chosen, both seem to agree that Barzani himself had not planned to initiate hostilities at the time.

⁸A good description of the course of military operations is contained in Schmidt, Journey, pp. 73-92.

⁹See Wenner, "Arab-Kurdish Rivalries," p. 78, for a description of Arab attitudes toward the revolt.

¹⁰Schmidt, Journey, pp. 116-30; Kinnane, The Kurds, pp. 62-63. See the discussion of Communist attitudes toward the insurgency in Wenner, "Arab-Kurdish Rivalries," p. 78, which traces the course of the tensions created by external Soviet support for Kassem and internal Communist party criticism of his regime. Mrs. Wenner notes the possible beginning of a rapprochement between Kassem and the Iraqi Communist Party during the last few weeks before Kassem's fall.

¹¹For this and the preceding paragraph, see Schmidt, Journey, pp. 59-71 and passim.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Keesing's Contemporary Archives (July 4-11, 1964), p. 20166; Schmidt, Journey, p. 90; Kinnane, The Kurds, p. 67.

¹⁴The most complete available description of insurgent military organization and equipment is contained in Schmidt, Journey, pp. 69-71.

¹⁵Schmidt, Journey, p. 64; Kinnane, The Kurds, p. 70.

¹⁶Wenner, "Arab-Kurdish Rivalries," p. 74.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 72; Schmidt, Journey, p. 45; Kinnane, The Kurds, pp. 60-61. Details are lacking regarding Kurdish involvement in quelling this uprising and a subsequent one involving the Communists in Kirkuk.

¹⁸Wenner, "Arab-Kurdish Rivalries," p. 71; The Middle East 1962 (London: Europa Publications, 1962), p. 132.

¹⁹Schmidt, Journey, pp. 69-71; The Statesman's Year-Book, 1960-1961, p. 1132; The Statesman's Year-Book, 1962, p. 1118.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹For an account of the relations between the rebels and the "free officers'" movement during 1962, see Schmidt, Journey, pp. 248-50.

²²Ibid., pp. 129-30; Wenner, "Arab-Kurdish Rivalries," p. 80.

²³For a full account of the negotiations between the Ba'ath regime and the insurgents, see Schmidt, Journey, pp. 244-65.

²⁴Ibid., pp. 69-71.

²⁵See map at the beginning of Schmidt, Journey.

²⁶Keessing's Contemporary Archives (July 4-11, 1964), p. 20166; Kinnane, The Kurds, p. 77; Schmidt in The New York Times, October 21, 1963.

²⁷Keessing's Contemporary Archives (July 4-11, 1964), p. 20166.

²⁸Schmidt outlines the proposals in the epilogue of Journey.

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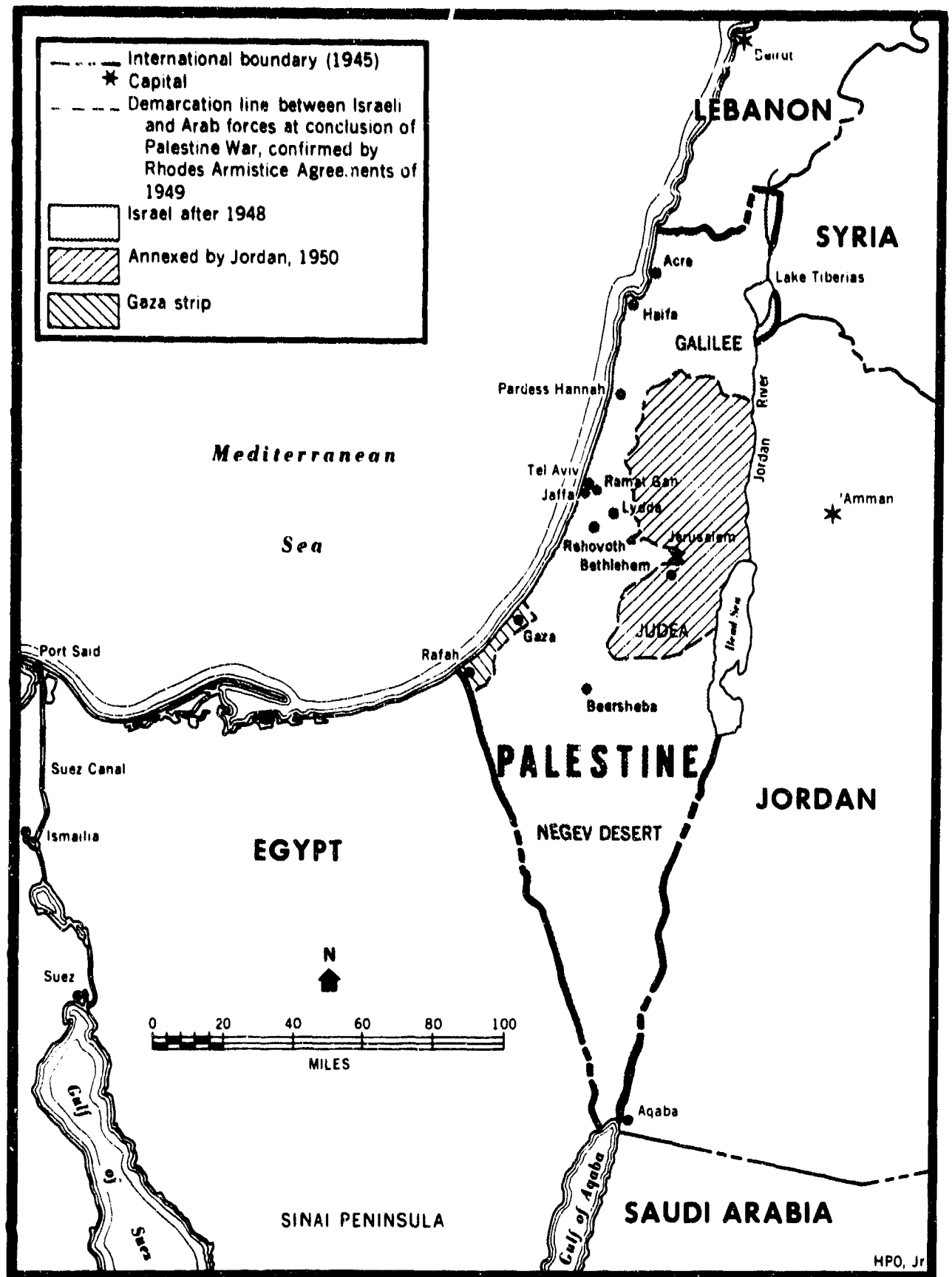
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Chapter Fourteen

**ISRAEL
1945-1948**

by Samuel L. Sharp



Chapter Fourteen
ISRAEL (1945-1948)

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World War II was scarcely ended when the British were faced in Palestine with growing Zionist agitation and terrorism aimed at the creation of a Jewish national home; a moderate counterinsurgency policy contained the insurgency while a political solution, previously unacceptable, was sought and found.

BACKGROUND

Jewish insurgency against the British in Palestine from 1945 until the new state of Israel was formed in 1948 cannot be properly understood without at least a brief survey of the historical background of the problem and some understanding of the situation in and around Palestine at the end of World War II.

Palestine, the Promised Land of antiquity, was for centuries the object of fervent prayers and dreams for the Jews in dispersion. This religious yearning was translated into secular and political terms with the emergence of a movement among the Jews of Russia and eastern Europe to establish agricultural settlements in Palestine. Their goal was both to escape anti-Semitic persecution and to promote a "normal" socioeconomic structure among a people limited to urban and commercial pursuits in the lands of their exile. The first colonies were established in 1882 and efforts were made to enlist rich Jewish philanthropists to support land purchases and the development of the pioneering settlements.

A political formulation was given to the striving for return to Zion by Dr. Theodor Herzl, the author of Der Judenstaat (The Jewish State), on whose initiative a Zionist congress was called in 1897 in Basel, Switzerland. The congress proclaimed the existence of a Jewish nation, called for the solution of the "Jewish problem" by the establishment of "a home in Palestine" through the concerted efforts of the leading nations of the world, and created the World Zionist Organization. Although Herzl personally was at one point willing to consider areas other than Palestine for Jewish colonization, the Seventh Zionist Congress (1904) rejected the "territorialist" solution and stressed the continued and exclusive interest in Palestine.

The Balfour Declaration and the British Mandate in Palestine

The cause of political Zionism received powerful support during World War I with the issuance of the Balfour Declaration on November 2, 1917, which committed the British government to efforts directed at the establishment of a Jewish national home in Palestine. Why the document was issued and how the British expected to square their commitment with the political promises made to Arabs in the process of enlisting their assistance against the Turks is of no importance in this account. However, the emergence of a vigorous resistance on the part of Palestinian and other Arabs to Jewish immigration and colonization efforts became one of the main factors in the reformulations of the scope of the British commitment to the Jews.

Within the framework of the peace settlements after World War I, Great Britain was given the mandate over Palestine by a decision of the Supreme Council of the victors on April 25, 1920, confirmed by the League of Nations on July 22, 1922. The mandate incorporated into its text, almost verbatim, the Balfour Declaration and the obligation to establish a Jewish national home in Palestine.¹ The Zionist Organization obtained recognition as the official Jewish Agency for cooperation with the mandatory power in establishing a Jewish national home. Even prior to the confirmation of the mandate by the League of Nations, the British defined the area of the Palestine mandate as excluding from Jewish immigration and colonization lands east of the Jordan River (which later became the emirate of Trans-Jordan, nucleus of the present Kingdom of Jordan). In the so-called Churchill Memorandum of June 3, 1922, the promise was made to the protesting Arabs that Jewish immigration would be subjected to the limits of economic absorptive capacity of the country; it was furthermore stated that the mandate did not obligate the British to work for the eventual establishment of a Jewish national state in all of Palestine.

The Jewish Community in Palestine and Its Quasi-Government

The composition of the Jewish community in Palestine, as it was found by the British at the beginning of the mandatory period and as it developed in the interwar period, is of great significance for an understanding of the degree of support on which the insurgency of the post-World War II years was able to count. The interest of Jews in Palestine was worldwide; the Zionist Organization, officially recognized as the Jewish Agency for Palestine in the mandate, was an international organization. However, of crucial importance was the ability of the Jewish community in Palestine (known in Hebrew as the *Yishuv*) to organize itself and to perform what has been aptly described as the function of quasi-government. Paradoxically, the local Jewish community enjoyed no official status until 1927 when the Palestine government issued regulations giving it legal existence as a religious rather than as an ethnic or political unit. In fact, however, the quasi-government came into existence in 1920 with the first elections, by secret ballot, of an Elected Assembly (*Assefath ha-Nivharim*) which in turn appointed a National Council (*Vaad Leumi*) whose Executive Committee was in actual charge of community affairs. Originally

concerned only with social and religious matters, the quasi-government also took over educational and health services. After 1923 the National Council was permanently represented on the Zionist General Council.

Like the Zionist Organization, the Jewish Agency was essentially an international body; enlarged in 1929 to include representatives of formally non-Zionist Jewish groups, the Agency at all times remained under Zionist direction. With its headquarters located in Jerusalem, the Agency as well as the formal representation of the Yishuv trained a number of people as experts in essentially governmental functions and prepared the core of a civil service. After the first outbreak of Arab hostilities against Jews, the Jewish community also built up its quasi-military arm, the Haganah (Defense) to compensate for the inadequacy of protection measures taken by the British government in Palestine. By 1936 the quasi-army had some 10,000 trained and armed members. The authority of the quasi-government was recognized by all Jewish groups, with the exception of some religious fanatics and the numerically insignificant Communists.

With the Palestine mandate launched against this background of conflicting promises and subjected to reinterpretation even before it became formally operative, the interwar history of the area was one of mounting tension caused by vigorous Zionist efforts to bring in and settle increasing numbers of Jewish immigrants, efforts which clashed with the awakening ambitions of the Arab community.

One View of British Reactions Toward Jews

An important factor in the way the mandate was interpreted and administered was the attitude of the British officials in charge. An authority on the Middle East, Professor George Lenczowski, has made certain observations relevant to an understanding of the circumstances of the post-World War II Jewish insurgency. Service in Palestine, he stated, was not considered very desirable by the British colonial officials. These men, who had a long experience of dealing with "backward" races, were, in Professor Lenczowski's opinion, "somewhat at a loss facing the well-educated European and often sophisticated Zionist community. . . . The average Jewish intellectual . . . was more highly educated, and perhaps more intelligent, than his British counterpart in the Palestinian administration. . . ."³

According to Professor Lenczowski, the inevitable tensions arising from a situation novel to the experience of the British administrators caused "many a British official who initially was not prejudiced against the Jews" to become "anti-Semitic after a tour of duty in Palestine. This was certainly true of many army officers." In this connection the almost complete refusal of Jewish women to fraternize should be mentioned as a not insignificant factor in shaping the attitudes of British personnel. Although such attitudes were certainly not invariably true, their prevalence may go a long way toward explaining why the Palestine mandate came to be looked upon increasingly as a liability by successive British governments.

Arabs Rebel Against Jewish Immigration and Against Plan of Partition

The British were also forced to view the mandate in the light of Arab resistance to continued Jewish immigration, and on several occasions this opposition flared up into systematic revolt and terror, especially in the 1930's.* On every major occasion, a Royal Commission would be appointed to investigate the cause of the outbreaks and to propose remedies.

The Royal (Peel) Commission of 1937 suggested partition of the country into an Arab state, a Jewish state, and an international zone to remain under British administration and to include Jerusalem and other places of religious importance to the Christian world. A technical commission to work out the details of the partition plan was even dispatched to Palestine, but the British government announced in advance that it was not to be bound by its recommendations. By the fall of 1938 the partition plan was all but abandoned, largely in response to the Arab rebellion.

"These events taught the lesson that the use of violence as a political weapon produced results which otherwise appeared unobtainable."⁴ Both the extreme Arab leaders and the militant fringe noticed the value of what Hurewitz calls "the terrorist extension of pressure politics."

Jews Split on Policy of Restraint and Irgun Turns to Violence

It is important for the history of the Jewish insurgency after World War II to remember that the first organized acts of Jewish counterterror occurred in response to the violence practiced by the Arabs in 1937. In opposition to the policy of restraint (havlagah) proclaimed by the official Zionist leadership and the Jewish quasi-government, elements of the opposition Revisionist party began to carry out acts of reprisal against the Arab community. After a young Revisionist was sentenced to death in June 1938, the Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organization) proclaimed its organized existence and launched wholesale retaliatory attacks, culminating in the explosion of land mines in an Arab fruit market which killed 74 and wounded 129 persons. The Irgun also began clandestine radio broadcasts and the distribution of illegal pamphlets and posters.

British Propose a New Solution, Which Both Arabs and Jews Reject

After abandoning the partition plan, the British government initiated a new phase in its approach to the Palestine problem by calling a conference in London with the participation of Palestinian Arabs, the Jewish Agency and also—for the first time—representatives of the independent Arab states, thus recognizing an international Arab interest in the issue. A statement published on the occasion of convening the conference reserved the right of the mandatory

*See Chapter Three, "Palestine (1933-1939)."

power to make its own decisions if no agreed solution could be reached at the conference. Participants were invited to present their views, including "arguments for the modification of the mandate."

At the conference—which actually meant separate talks by the British with Arab and Jewish delegations—the rapidly worsening international situation and the desire of the Chamberlain government to appease the Arab side in order to counteract increasing pro-Axis sentiments in the Middle East, determined the direction of the British proposals, including drastic curtailment of Jewish immigration and land purchases and abandonment of partition schemes in favor of a unitary Palestinian state, in which the numerically stronger Arabs would prevail. The British proposals were rejected by both Arabs and Jews, and the conference collapsed.

New British Plan for a Joint Arab-Jewish State Pleases Neither Side

The British government then came out with the promised unilateral solution in its white paper of May 17, 1939. The document rejected outright the idea of a Jewish state, but also pointed out that no promise had ever been made to turn Palestine into an Arab state. The British proposed to establish, after a transition period of ten years, a joint Arab-Jewish state on the basis of a constitution drafted by both elements, with the cooperation of the British, giving due recognition to protection of the holy places, the special position of the Jewish national home, and British strategic interests. Only after the establishment of internal peace among the Arabs and Jews would complete independence be granted.

Meanwhile, in recognition of Arab opposition, a limit of 75,000 would be put on Jewish immigration over the next five years, after which continued influx of Jews would be permitted only with Arab consent. Illegal Jewish immigrants would be deported and the numbers of those who might enter illegally in spite of British measures to prevent immigration would be deducted from the general legal quota. The sale of land to Jews would be prohibited in some areas and strictly regulated in others.⁵

The white paper of 1939 met with the determined opposition of the Jews while it encouraged extremist Arab leaders to hold out for even greater concessions. "By the eve of World War II," to quote Hurewitz, "the Palestine mandate had already begun to break down. . . . The Chamberlain Government alienated the Zionists without befriending the Arabs. . . . Since the 1939 white paper was never rescinded, the mandatory ruled in Palestine without the consent of either section of the population, and the government was gradually transformed from one that by and large was benevolent into one that was increasingly autocratic."⁶

Because of the disruption of League of Nations activities, the new policy of the British government never came up for appraisal by the Council of the League. However, a majority of the Permanent Mandate Commission of the League criticized the white paper as incompatible

with the terms of the mandate. In the protest of the Jewish community of Palestine against the provisions and the spirit of the white paper lie the roots of the Jewish insurgency after World War II.

During World War II the Jews Fight for Britain and Prepare Postwar Position

The outbreak of the war, however, brought in Palestine "an artificial truce" and an end to open hostilities. Jews everywhere found themselves automatically committed to support those fighting Hitler. Jews in Palestine openly and understandably offered their support to the British, and many Jews enlisted as volunteers in British formations. A Jewish Brigade was authorized in 1944. The presence of many Allied troops in Palestine during the war and the occasional use made by the British of Jewish military contributions had its postwar effect, by permitting the Jewish community to build up its store of arms and ammunition by various means, legal as well as illegal.

During the war the Zionist Organization in the United States adopted the "Biltmore program," which supported the demands formulated by David Ben Gurion, head of the Zionist Executive Council, for a Jewish state in all of Palestine, a Jewish army, and unlimited immigration. This program, after being endorsed by the General Council of the Zionist Organization in Jerusalem (November 10, 1942), became the official Zionist policy. It reflected the belief that American support would be more decisive than British opposition in the postwar period.

Condition of European Jewry at War's End Makes Palestine Problem Critical

At war's end in August 1945, President Truman called upon the British to grant 100,000 permits to Jewish refugees for immigration to Palestine. The British then proposed an Anglo-American commission of inquiry, which held hearings in the displaced persons camps as well as in Palestine. This unofficial committee was followed by another investigating body, this time composed of British and U.S. government officials, which recommended a return to the idea of a federated Arab-Jewish state in Palestine, a solution totally unacceptable to all concerned.

A complicating factor was the existence of a vast reservoir of displaced persons anxious for immigration to Palestine as a result of the Nazi policies and the dislocations of World War II. Despite the widespread implementation of the Nazi policy of Jewish genocide, some Jews survived in German concentration camps. Others, especially Polish Jews, had found refuge in the Soviet Union and after the war preferred not to return to their destroyed homes and non-existent occupations in Poland but to continue into Germany. This was also true of surviving Jews from other eastern European countries for whom, as a middle-class group, the advent of Communist governments held out little hope of economic adjustment. The movement of those

people into Germany and Austria was not entirely spontaneous—there was evidence of an underground helping Jews from eastern Europe enter Germany by the thousands through not very tightly controlled frontier points in Poland and Czechoslovakia.⁸ But Germany, with its anti-Semitism, offered no permanent refuge for most of these people. Thus a compelling humanitarian argument was available in support of the political ambitions of Zionism.

In summation, Jewish freedom to renew the Zionist fight after the downfall of Hitler, the formulation of demands for Jewish statehood as official Zionist policy, the increase of pressures for immigration to Palestine for the remnants of Europe's decimated Jews, and British attempts to continue in essence its white paper policies after the war brought about the full development of Jewish insurgency in Palestine.

INSURGENCY

The ending of the five-year period for limited Jewish immigration provided by the 1939 white paper and the apparent British determination in 1945 to prevent further immigration brought the Palestine situation to the point of explosion. The purpose of the insurgency was to apply and maintain pressure against the British mandatory administration and to force eventual acceptance of Jewish objectives, primarily that of unrestricted immigration into Palestine. On this postulate all Jewish factions agreed, although they differed on many other points of the political program.

The Jewish Community Is Widely Divided as to Aims, Parties, and Insurgent Organization

The most active insurrectionists desired an independent Jewish state comprising as much of Palestine as possible. The overwhelming majority of Zionists came to accept the idea of a Jewish state in a partitioned Palestine. There was a small minority such as the Ihud group which considered an Arab-Jewish rapprochement possible, but even such groups advocated unrestricted Jewish immigration.

Within this loose framework of objectives the political makeup of the Yishuv was constantly shifting, there being 10 parties involved in the 1936 elections, but 24 by the 1944 elections (besides several which refused to participate). Political coalitions were formed and broken, and every party had its moderate and radical wings. Out of the 1944 elections the Mapai, or Palestine Labor Party, emerged with 63 seats. Since it was the political element of Histadrut, the major federation of labor unions, its power reached into all aspects of Yishuv life. Histadrut was at that time the largest employer, trader, banker, distributor, producer, and publisher in Palestine and had done a great deal to spark the economic development of the country.

With such multiple political splits it is understandable that the active insurrectionist movement should have had several branches differing in degrees of moderation or extremism. There were

three distinct groups involved in active insurrectionist activity: the Z'va Haganah (Army of Defense), the Irgun Zvai Leumi (National Military Organization), and the Lokhame Heruth Israel (variously known as the Fighters for the Freedom of Israel (FFI), Lehi or LHY, or Stern Group or Stern Gang).

The Haganah: Genesis, Strength, Training, and Weaponry

The most important by far was Haganah, which had evolved from the Hashomer (Watchmen) in the pre-World War I villages. After the British acquired the mandate they had the option either to garrison every village or to legalize some kind of Jewish defense organization. The first was too expensive and the second would have led to parallel Arab demands; so the administration, in a manner which typified its Palestine rule, tolerated the existence of Haganah without giving it official sanction. "Haganah, forced into illegality, led a kind of semi-underground existence."⁹

Some 30,000 Jewish volunteers who had served with the British forces during World War II formed the postwar nucleus of a trained Jewish army.¹⁰ Haganah strength at the end of the mandate in May 1948 was a mobilized force of 35,000.¹¹ During the period of the insurrection, Haganah was divided into reservists, the static defense force, and the Palmah, or special striking force. Palmah was officially a part of Haganah, but operated under a separate headquarters which was the intermediary between Palmah units and the Haganah high command. Tactically Palmah enjoyed almost complete independence and was the only permanently mobilized Haganah group. It had a bare nucleus of a navy and an air force, which flew its first plane on March 27, 1948. Its membership of about 3,000 included 1,000 girls.¹²

Training for Haganah and Palmah units was difficult and was often interrupted when British patrols appeared in the neighborhood. Units living in the settlements paid for their keep by training only half the time and working the other half. The special training for squad and platoon commanders in particular took place in the remote settlements. A one-year compulsory training for high school seniors was instituted in November 1945, but it was of the most rudimentary sort involving basic fieldcraft and use of arms.¹³

Since it was a capital offense to bear arms, the logistic problem presented serious difficulties. Haganah's close connections with labor groups made transport accessible, as the transport cooperatives were run by Histadrut, the federation of labor unions. Arms were deeply cached in small lots throughout the settlements and villages, though British search parties found many of them. Weapons were obtained from a variety of sources. Some were purchased in the United States, many from the Arabs, and Czechoslovakia proved to be a good source. Also, small but growing local manufacturing facilities began to turn out Sten guns, hand grenades, and 2-inch mortars with their shells.¹⁴

When Haganah openly showed its cached weapons after the termination of the mandate, the tally was 22,000 rifles (many obsolete), 11,100 submachineguns (many locally produced Sten guns), 1,500 light machineguns, a few medium machineguns, 105 3-inch mortars, 682 2-inch mortars, 16 Davidka mortars, 72 PIATS and antitank rifles, and 4 65-mm. guns.¹⁵ A November 1947 tally of weapons was appreciably lower than this, but this indicates the type and limitations of armaments, for which ammunition was a major problem.

The Irgun Under Menachem Begin Is More Violent and Extremist Than the Haganah

The Irgun Zvai Leumi (IZL) embraced violence as a political instrument. Organized activities on the part of the Irgun first became evident when the white paper of 1939 was issued. The Irgun declared a truce with the British during World War II, but began active insurrection again in 1944 when the interim period allowed under the white paper was running out. An offshoot of the opposition Revisionist Zionist Organization led by Zeev Jabotinsky, the organization rejected the authority of the Jewish Agency, of the official Zionist leadership, and of Haganah.¹⁶

In 1944 and most of 1945, the Irgun had to operate clandestinely within the Yishuv, in opposition to Haganah, and it maintained its clandestine character until the end of the mandate. The Irgun declared "war" against "the British Administration in Eretz Israel [the Zionist term for Palestine] which hands our brothers over to Hitler. Our people is at war with this regime—war to the end."¹⁷

Menachem Begin was commander of the Irgun from 1944 until its dissolution, but never held a military rank within the organization. The central Irgun organization consisted of a high command with regional commanders responsible to it. The Irgun was organized into four sections—the Army of the Revolution (AR), the Shock Units (SU), the Assault Force (AF), and the Revolutionary Propaganda Force (RPF). The AR existed mostly in theory until after November 1947, when every Irgunist was drafted into a regular AR unit. The SU was intended for operations in Arab areas, but it merged operationally with the AF, which carried the burden of Irgun operations during the insurrectionist phase. The RPF was responsible for the clandestine wall newspaper, Herut (Freedom), clandestine radio broadcasts, and the public information programs of the Irgun.¹⁸

The hard core of activists on full-time service ranged from "at times less than twenty, never more than 30-40, with the rest on call when needed."¹⁹ The total strength, according to Begin, was "hundreds and then thousands," while Kimche refers to "several hundred" in early 1947 with two or three thousand active sympathizers.²⁰ Logistical problems were similar to those of Haganah, but perhaps more difficult since the Irgun lacked the degree of sympathy that Haganah commanded within the Yishuv. Transport was obtained by capturing British jeeps or

trucks when needed or by borrowing or "requisitioning" local trucks. Explosives came from Arab suppliers or from raids on British ports.

The Stern Gang—More Radical Than the Irgun

The unofficial name of the FFI or Stern Group was taken from its original leader, Abraham Stern, who had broken with the Irgun to form a more radical wing. Stern was killed in a fight with the police in 1942, but the Stern Gang continued operations and, unlike the Irgun, never declared a truce during World War II. Details of its organization are not known, but it had at least five groups, including an operations group and an information group known as Group V.²¹ The Stern Gang had an estimated strength of 250 to 300 in 1944 and of not more than 150 active fighting members in early 1947.²²

Jewish Objectives, Strategies, and Tactics

The strategy and tactics of the three organizations varied within a framework of the broad objective to force the British into greater compliance with Jewish goals. Haganah was split on the question of a Jewish state, many of its supporters holding out only for some sort of autonomy. The Irgun envisaged the creation of a Jewish state covering both sides of the River Jordan, while the Stern Group spoke of a state within "historic frontiers," a rather vague definition since, as Avner comments, "nothing in history is so elastic as frontiers."²³

Haganah objectives tended to concentrate around the immigration question and the British interception of illegal immigrant ships. Haganah called its methods "constructive action," and its terrorist tactics were brought into play against patrol launches, radar sites, and installations and equipment which might be used to intercept illegal immigrant ships. The core of its resistance program was Aliyah Beth (illegal immigration), which required a Haganah network all over Europe to recruit, help, and arrange transportation for immigrants.²⁴

The Irgun and Stern Group agreed in their general strategic outlook. The British, they felt, would never permit unlimited Jewish immigration or a Jewish majority in Palestine unless forced to do so. They also believed that the Arabs and Jews could have worked out their differences had the British not set the two groups against each other.²⁵ On tactics they split. The Irgun claimed it never killed save in self-defense, and it disowned the terrorist assassination techniques employed by the Stern Gang. Both relied on terrorism, but in different degrees, to force British withdrawal from Palestine and the creation of a Jewish state.

Jewish Operations Against the British: An Eye for an Eye

In October 1945, Haganah's illegal radio, The Voice of Israel, announced the formation of an active resistance movement.²⁶ After the Labor government had come into power in England in July 1945, even the Irgun and Stern Gang had been quiet, waiting to see if a change in

government in Great Britain meant a change of policy in Palestine. By November, however, terrorism was again becoming rampant, with the difference that this time the Hagannah was joining in. Under the increased suppressive measures invoked by the British military command, the Yishuv solidified its passive resistance and the pattern of the insurrection against the British became clearer.

The insurrectionist groups all maintained extensive and detailed observation of British movements, and both Jewish and British observers commented that the Jewish intelligence system was first-class.²⁷

The Stern Gang blew up trucks and conducted assassinations. In February 1946, Hagannah, the Irgun, and the Stern Group cooperated in attacks on airfields at Lydda and Kastina, combined with attacks on British mobile units. The Irgun attacked a police station at Ramat Gan to obtain arms and, in June 1946, kidnaped five British officers from an officers' club as hostages for some of their members under death penalty. One of the Irgun's major operations, in July 1946, was blowing up a wing of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem which was used as British Command Headquarters.²⁸

On May 4, 1947, the Acre Prison was attacked by the Irgun, the wall was breached with explosives, and 214 Arab and 41 Jewish prisoners escaped. Barclay's Bank was robbed several times, a Stern Gang specialty to gather funds. Roads were mined, railroads blown up, airfields raided, British armories pillaged for equipment, and clandestine newspapers and radio broadcasts maintained to condemn British actions, moves, and methods. Shell Oil storage tanks were attacked and set on fire, radio stations and police stations attacked, and passive resistance by the Yishuv encouraged.

The Irgun's retaliatory measures against the British took various forms. When British military courts, in addition to prison sentences, called for 18 lashes for various prisoners, the Irgun retaliated in December 1946 by having equal whippings administered to four abducted British personnel.²⁹ The British then abolished flogging. As Polk comments, "during twenty-five years of peace the Agency had urged that this be done—with no success. The moral seemed clear."³⁰ Another, even grimmer, retaliation occurred in July 1947, when two British army sergeants were hanged by the Irgun in retaliation for the British execution of three Irgun members.

In 1948, the insurgents had reason to believe that their goal was in sight, and raids on the British shifted mainly to collection of materiel. On April 4, 1948, a British antitank artillery regiment camp near Pardess Hannah was captured by the Irgun and the guns and ammunition taken; this was followed two weeks later in the same area by the capture of a British ammunition train. However, anti-British operations generally ceased as the possibility of a political settlement appeared—after three years of armed insurgency.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

For the British, the three-year military struggle against insurgency in Palestine came close on the heels of total involvement in World War II. British troops relieved of their duties in Europe as the war ended in 1945 were moved into Palestine to meet the accelerating surge of terrorism.

British Mission and Major Problem

The primary mission of the British troops in Palestine was always "to keep the peace and maintain order," but during the course of the insurgency the nature of their role changed, just as did the role of the various Jewish groups. British efforts moved from a buildup and training phase, when the special techniques needed for operations were learned and refined, to a period of intense operations when British-Jewish relations were most violently hostile, and then to a final phasing-out as an end to the mandate was in sight.

Throughout the insurgency, the British were faced with the remarkable cohesiveness of the Yishuv, or Jewish community. The Jews' complete lack of cooperation with the authorities afforded the terrorists protection by mere passive resistance. Because the Yishuv was seemingly impervious to subversion and generally resisted all British efforts to enlist informants, intelligence was a special problem for the counterinsurgency forces.³¹ The Palestine experience was a clear demonstration of the difficulty of conducting counterinsurgency operations in the face of popular resistance.

British Strength and Training

In early 1946 British troop strength reached the level it was to maintain until withdrawal from the country began in early 1948. The 6th Airborne Division, 3d Infantry Division (minus some units), and the 9th Infantry Brigade were the main British units, supported at first by two squadrons of Halifax aircraft and later by air support from various bases throughout the Middle East.³² An unofficial source states British troop strength in November 1947 was 90,000, besides 7,400 soldiers in the British-officered Arab Legion, 3,000 with the Trans-Jordan Frontier Force, and 4,000 members of the British police force.³³ The British government in an official publication claimed that 84,000 British troops were involved and that the operation from the end of World War II to the end of the mandate cost the United Kingdom 100 million pounds.³⁴

Although many of the troops brought into Palestine in mid- and late 1945 had been through World War II, the requirements for Palestine were sharply at variance with their previous experience. A team of specialists trained British troops in the special techniques of this new warfare—how to throw a cordon around a given area, avoid unnecessary force, enforce curfews, maintain road restrictions, and make searches and arrests.³⁵

Tactics Stress Cordon and Search Techniques

"Cordon and search" was a valuable technique. Areas in Arab villages and Jewish settlements were cordoned off for house-to-house searches to apprehend illegal immigrants and Jewish terrorists and to find and confiscate illegal arms.³⁶

Since all Arab and Jewish employees were considered unreliable, optimum security precautions were maintained when a search was being planned. A minimum of personnel was included in the planning, no telephones were used, written instructions were avoided, troops involved were permitted to continue normal plans even when the officers knew such plans would be interrupted by a search duty, and often troops leaving a camp on a search would head at first in the wrong direction to mislead observers outside the camp.

Various techniques were tried for spotting insurgent activity. Aircraft were used for patrolling and spotting illegal immigrant ships and often for spotting insurrectionists after an attack. Air photo reconnaissance was the primary means for planning cordon and search operations until troops became personally familiar with the areas concerned. One of the more unusual methods employed during searches was the use of "metal-sniffing" dogs, used to locate arms caches, in cases where metal detectors had failed.³⁷

Averaging about six a month, the cordons and searches varied in size. The largest one was undertaken beginning the day after the attack by the Irgun on the King David Hotel on July 22, 1946. First, Jerusalem was searched, 46 Jews were detained, and a nightly house curfew was imposed on the city. Operation SHARK began before dawn on July 30, continued until the afternoon of August 2, and involved the entire 6th Airborne Division, with some additional troops from the 1st Infantry Division. Every house and person in Tel Aviv and part of Jaffa was subjected to a close search in an effort to ferret out members of the Stern Gang and the Irgun. Some 787 people were detained and sent to the detention camp at Rafah for more thorough interrogation. Five arms dumps were found, the largest in the basement of the Great Synagogue, along with some forged bonds and forging equipment.³⁸

Other Tactics: Patrols, Curfews, etc.

Besides these operations, patrols were regularly conducted to enforce curfews, to hinder or prevent training by insurrectionist groups, and to curtail movements by day. They sometimes included intensive patrolling of the railroad system to prevent sabotage. The Irgun and Stern Group, for instance, carried out 21 attacks against the railroads in the first three weeks of November 1946 and brought on a strike by the Arab engineers and firemen. In order to start the trains running normally again, the entire 6th Airborne Division was fully occupied for two weeks in railroad protection. Such intense guarding was slowly reduced as attacks against the railroads ceased, and eventually the regular patrol patterns were resumed.³⁹ Airfields and police stations were also objects of regular patrols.

Curfews were imposed for various reasons. Tel Aviv was placed under a curfew in October 1945, following a riot, and again in late December 1945 as a punitive measure for terrorist activity. At the end of June 1946 a punitive curfew was imposed on Rehovoth until 6 p.m., owing to "bad behaviour of Jews in town" the day before, during operation AGATHA, an intensive settlement search for Palmah members and Haganah leaders.⁴⁰ After attacks by insurrectionist groups, as, for example, when five British officers were kidnaped, curfews were imposed to help the search that followed. Sometimes the prime purpose was to curtail movement, during the day or night or both, or to prevent demonstrations such as that of April 16-17 when four Irgun members were executed at Acre Prison. An 11-night curfew was imposed on parts of Haifa at the end of July 1947, following the announcement that Jewish immigrants on an illegal immigrant ship, the President Warfield, were to be shipped back to Germany. A few curfews were imposed in 1948 in order to hinder Arab-Jewish clashes.

Snap searches of buses, offices, and housing areas were also made, in attempts to find arms and explosives. Road restrictions were occasionally imposed, using roadblocks and after-dark road curfews. Often a show of force was used either to prevent riots or to quell disturbances.

British Remand Palestine Problem to the United Nations and Decide on Withdrawal

In 1947, the British set in motion events which were to change the character of the struggle and, eventually, to end it. In April of that year, they transferred consideration of the Palestine problem to the United Nations. A Special Committee (UNSCOP) was created to study the problem and report to the General Assembly. On November 29, 1947, the General Assembly voted 33 to 16, with 10 abstentions, for the partition of Palestine.

The plan was accepted by the Zionists, but violently opposed by the Arabs, who vowed to resist its implementation. Early in 1948, troops and guerrillas from neighboring Arab countries began to attack Jewish villages, and Jewish efforts were diverted more and more from the British to this Arab threat. Meanwhile, the British announced that they would not cooperate in executing the partition plan and would withdraw from Palestine by May 15, 1948.

British Limit Operations to Holding Actions Until Their Withdrawal Is Complete

After the U.N. vote, therefore, the British engaged primarily in measures to keep the peace during the remaining months of the mandate. They quelled a riot that broke out between Jewish and Arab prisoners in Acre Prison when the partition vote was announced on November 30, 1947. Jeep patrols "to restore confidence" and armored patrols in Haifa were other peacekeeping efforts. In January, British troops conducted flag marches through selected Arab areas and relieved a Jewish settlement under Arab attack, a type of activity which became more frequent as the mandate was running out. Relief of Jewish convoys and skirmishes with Arab forces

were not uncommon, and searches of houses used by snipers, both Jewish and Arab, resulted in seizure of arms. British equipment was particularly coveted by both sides and was exceptionally liable to heavy attack aimed at its capture. The British increased security measures but still lost supplies.

Until the very end of the mandate, illegal immigration was prevented. During the last three and a half months, the Royal Navy took over all responsibility. Prior to that time, the navy had intercepted illegal immigrant ships as they entered the three-mile limit, and the responsibility for transshipment had then been turned over to the army. Aircraft were used for patrolling and spotting such ships.

In the spring of 1948, a last-minute American attempt to jettison the partition plan once more in favor of a U.N. trusteeship failed to pass. On May 15, 1948, the withdrawal of British troops was completed and the independence of Israel was proclaimed, bringing to an end the period of insurgency and counterinsurgency.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

Though the final solution to the Palestine question was in greater part political, it was the militant Jewish insurgency that created the climate and maintained the pressure which led to this political solution. Only through this pressure were the British forced to seek solutions outside of their own sphere of control and pass the problem to the United Nations. Whether the Jewish state of Israel would have come into being without the insurgency is very doubtful.

In summary, the insurgency can be credited with a number of achievements, all of which helped to attain the common objective of the three insurgency groups—the formation of the state of Israel. It forced the British to undertake heavy commitments in Palestine, commitments which they were not ready to maintain over an indefinite period. It focused world attention on Palestine and its attendant problems, including the plight of the remnants of European Jewry who were still in displaced persons camps. It built throughout the Yishuv cohesion and a sense of purpose—which increased rather than decreased under British efforts to break the insurgency and which was required for creating the state of Israel. It created a climate of uncertainty and fear which demoralized the British serving in Palestine and eroded the British will both in Palestine and in the United Kingdom, so that by 1947 the British government was willing to accept any graceful—or even not so graceful—escape from a situation promising nothing but increasing embarrassment.

Problems Limit Achievements of the Counterinsurgency

The British had faced serious problems. They undertook counterinsurgency operations in an entirely hostile climate and attempted to operate without any local support. They were at a

disadvantage in that they could not identify their enemies in the total mass of population, whereas the insurgents knew precisely who and where their enemies were. They could enforce the mandatory administration's rule and various policies such as nonimmigration only by constant vigilance and pressure, maintained at high cost with a lavish use of manpower—all of which effort served only to maintain a status quo. They operated in a vacuum without a set military goal as an achievable end, a condition which further demoralized the troops.

The best that the counterinsurgency effort was able to achieve with a large outlay of men and materiel was limited control and the successful blockade of illegal immigration. Counterinsurgency forces were operating against a different cultural community which they little understood, and the forces themselves had no direct stake in the outcome. The insurgents, on the other hand, were cohesive and dedicated because their personal and "national" interests were very directly involved, far beyond the point of prestige or traditional spheres of influence motivating British policy. Furthermore, the post-World War II period was one when British colonial policy was being redefined and the aims of empire were changing; British effort was thus eroded by the knowledge that what was fought for today might be given up tomorrow as a matter of policy realignment.

Violence has often forced recognition of reality in a political situation which has resisted all other pressures, and the Palestine Jewish insurgency certainly helped bring the reality of the situation home to the British government. Counterinsurgency, to succeed, needs to offer feasible alternatives to the insurgency, but the alternatives offered to the Jewish insurgents were not acceptable and thus not feasible. Insurgency is often an effective spur to finding additional possibilities in seemingly impossible political quandaries. Thus with added pressure from the Palestinian Jewish insurgents, Britain found the U. N. alternative at least acceptable, if not desirable, in the absence of any better solution.

NOTES

¹ For a brief general summary, see George Lenczowski, The Middle East in World Affairs (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1952, 1956).

² "Mandatory shall be responsible for placing the country under such political administration and economic condition as will secure the establishment of the Jewish National Home. . . ." (Mandate of Palestine, Art. 2, cited in Great Britain, Foreign and Colonial Offices, Palestine: Termination of the Mandate, 15th May 1948 (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1948).

³ Lenczowski, The Middle East, p. 321.

⁴ J. C. Hurewitz, The Struggle for Palestine (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1950), p. 93.

⁵ For an extensive summary of the white paper, see Palestine: A Study of Jewish, Arab and British Policies (New Haven: Yale, 1947), II, 901-908.

⁶ Hurewitz, The Struggle for Palestine, p. 106.

⁷ Lenczowski, The Middle East, p. 326.

⁸ Report by General Morgan cited *ibid.*, pp. 329-30.

⁹ Arthur Koestler, Promise and Fulfilment (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1949), p. 70.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

¹¹ Sir John Bagot Glubb, A Soldier with the Arabs (New York: Harper and Co., 1958). General Glubb thought Jewish strength was 65,000 while Arab commanders set the figure as high as 100,000. Also see Jon and David Kimche, Both Sides of the Hill: Britain and the Palestine War (London: Secker and Warburg, 1960), p. 160.

¹² Kimche, Both Sides of the Hill, p. 160; Lt. Col. Netanel Lorch, The Edge of the Sword: Israel's War of Independence, 1947-1949 (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1961) gives the same proportion but sets the total figure at 3,100.

¹³ Hurewitz, The Struggle for Palestine, pp. 239f.

¹⁴ Lorch, The Edge of the Sword, p. 49. Menachem Begin, The Revolt: Story of the Irgun, tr. Samuel Katz (New York: Henry Schuman, 1951), also makes scattered references to local arms production.

¹⁵ Kimche, Both Sides of the Hill, p. 161.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 26n.

¹⁷ Begin, The Revolt, pp. 42-43, cited from the public call to revolt issued by the Irgun in early 1944.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, chapter VI. Begin discusses the Irgun organization in detail.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

²⁰ Kimche, Both Sides of the Hill, p. 45n.

²¹ Avner [pseud.], Memoirs of an Assassin, tr. Burgo Partridge (New York and London: Thomas Yoseloff, 1959), pp. 79-80.

²² Kimche, Both Sides of the Hill, p. 45n.

²³ Avner, Memoirs, p. 63.

²⁴ Moshe Pearlman, The Army of Israel (New York: Philosophical Library, 1950), pp. 67f.

²⁵ Palestine: A Study, p. 1042.

²⁶ See Palestine: A Study, pp. 1201-1202.

²⁷ Brig. R. N. Anderson, "Search Operations in Palestine: The Problem of the Soldier," The Army Quarterly, LV (January 1948), p. 203.

²⁸ Polk and others state that Begin had proposed a joint attack of all groups. Haganah refused "but agreed not to prevent it if it was carried out at night and with a warning to prevent loss of life. The Irgun broke its agreement. . . ." See William R. Polk, David M. Stampler, and Edmund Asfour, Backdrop to Tragedy: The Struggle for Palestine (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957), p. 192. Begin claims, on the other hand, that warning was given and rejected by British commanders. He further claims that the entire operation has been coordinated with Haganah. Begin, The Revolt, chapter XV, pp. 212-30.

²⁹ Begin, The Revolt, p. 234.

³⁰ Polk, Stampler, and Asfour, Backdrop to Tragedy, p. 192.

³¹ Maj. R. D. Wilson, Cordon and Search (Aldershot, England: Gale and Polden, 1949), pp. 36-40; also Anderson, The Army Quarterly, LV (January 1948), p. 203.

³² Wilson, Cordon and Search, p. 51.

³³ Lorch, The Edge of the Sword.

³⁴ Palestine, Termination of the Mandate, p. 10.

³⁵ Wilson, Cordon and Search, pp. 19-21.

³⁶ Ibid., passim. This volume is essentially an account of British military tactics in Palestine, 1945-48. Appendix K gives a summary of the 6th Airborne Division's internal security operations from October 1945 to April 1948, showing the frequency, scope, and intensity of the operations at different times.

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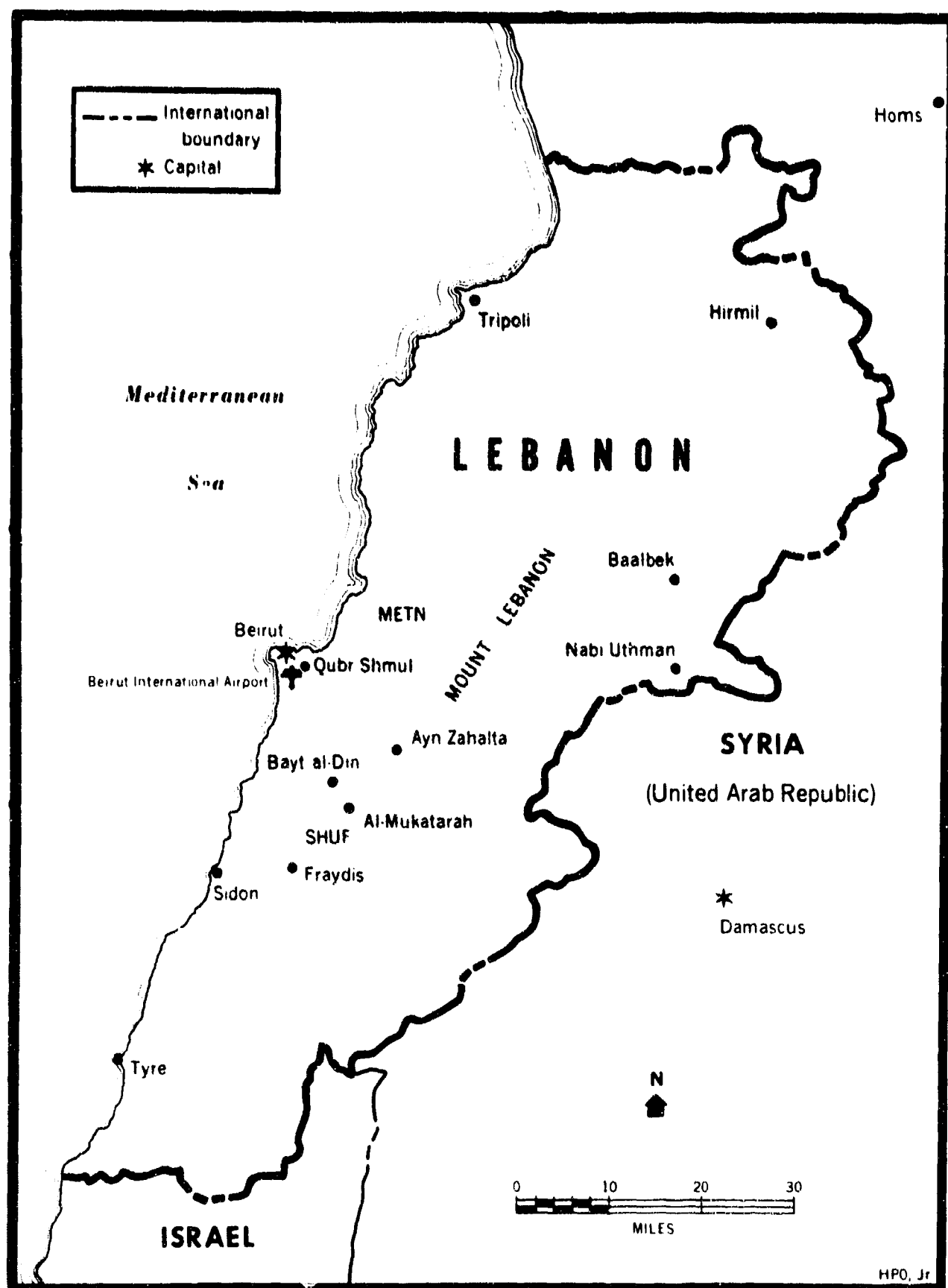
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Chapter Fifteen

LEBANON 1958

by Abdul Aziz Said



LEBANON (1958)

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Chapter Fifteen

LEBANON (1958)

by Abdul Asis Said

In the 1958 Western-oriented Chamoun government, facing an insurgency with international implications, called upon the United States for aid; although U.S. forces responded to the call, the insurgency was ended, not by fighting, but by political concessions that recognized the historically unique and neutral position of this Christian-Muslim country in the Middle East.

BACKGROUND

In defiance of the Biblical dictum about a house divided against itself, Lebanon has somehow managed to endure. This small country, hardly twice the size of Delaware, is more than a geographic expression or a political entity: it is a state of mind. It is a colorful miniature of diverse peoples, an ornate mixture of religious groups, a patchwork of loyalties, a manifold terrain, a diversity of climatic conditions, a mosaic of communities, and a multiform society. In the summer of 1958, the questions of presidential succession and Lebanon's place in the Arab world brought a full-scale crisis that menaced the delicate balance in the country and threatened the fragile edifice of the Lebanese state.

The country is divided into four natural belts, all running parallel to the Mediterranean coast. The first belt is a fertile coastal strip intersected by mountains and extending from the Israeli border in the south to the Syrian border in the north. Immediately east of the coastal strip is the Western Range, with Mount Lebanon rising over 10,000 feet, the highest point in the Levant (the eastern littoral of the Mediterranean). Here there are abundant water and intense cultivation. The third belt, about 70 miles long and about 10 miles wide, is a plateau area bounded by low hills. Along the Syrian border there is a high mountain range, known as Anti-Lebanon, whose peaks rise to 7,000 feet. This fourth belt, unlike the Mount Lebanon range, has a scant water supply and is sparsely populated.

The climate of the country is as varied as the terrain. In the coastal strip, the winters are mild and the summers are moderately hot and quite humid. The mountain zones are characterized by cold winters with heavy snow; the summers there are cool and pleasant.

Ethnic and Religious Diversity in Lebanon

Ethnic and social conditions in Lebanon make this small country of 1.5 million people a veritable melting pot. There are at least 14 different religious communities in Lebanon, each conscious of its separate identity, sensitive to its rights, and retaining its unique outlook and orientation.

Official records indicate that Christians constitute about 53 percent of the population, or 773,000 persons—including 424,000 Maronites, 149,000 Greek Orthodox, and smaller numbers of Greek Catholics, Armenian Orthodox and Catholics, Syrian Orthodox and Catholics, Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Chaldeans. The Muslims and Druzes, on the other hand, are estimated to number 624,000—including 286,000 Sunnis, 250,000 Shi'ites and 88,000 Druzes. Considering the fact that the most recent census was taken in 1932, however, the Muslims' claim that they now constitute a majority of the inhabitants is not altogether unreasonable.¹

Economic Conditions in the 1950's

In 1958, the Lebanese enjoyed one of the highest standards of living in the Middle East. The economy was thriving, and the annual per capita income was somewhat over \$300. This income was high in comparison with the other countries in the Middle East; and, although the distribution of wealth might appear unsatisfactory by Western standards, it was far better in Lebanon than in other Arab states.²

The revenue from tourism, banking, and commercial and professional services, which together make up the largest of the three pillars of the Lebanese economy, provided for 65 percent of the total national income. Industry provided over 15 percent of the total income, making Lebanon the most industrialized Arab state. Agriculture, on the other hand, played a less important role in Lebanon than in other Middle Eastern states. Although Lebanon produces fruits, vegetables, and some cereal grains, the country is not agriculturally self-sufficient.³

Although economic conditions were relatively good in the 1950's, the opposition to the government claimed that agriculture and industry were being administratively ignored because of the pressures exerted by the powerful mercantile interests, which were heavily represented in the government. Despite these criticisms, however, economic conditions were not an appreciable factor in the outbreak of the 1958 insurgency. The wages of the labor force were generally on the rise, and the government had constructed a hydroelectric plant and initiated an irrigation project as part of a program to modernize agriculture and industry.

Government and Administration

A part of the Turkish Ottoman Empire before World War I and a French mandate into the period of World War II, Lebanon achieved full independence in 1943, although the French did not leave until the end of the war. Lebanon has had long experience with strong executives and

bureaucratic government through both its traditional and colonial structures. The country has a parliamentary system modeled after the French, but the actual working of the government is characterized by two phenomena: it is unitary in nature with extreme centralization of decision-making, and the executive-bureaucratic branch is predominant. Autonomous local government is nonexistent in Lebanon, and the legislative and judicial branches of the national government are subordinate to the executive and central bureaucracy.

The president of Lebanon is not a figurehead but a true chief executive. Elected by parliament for six years, he is not supposed to succeed himself under the Lebanese Constitution. Nonetheless, Bisharah al-Khuri, the country's first president, had been elected to two consecutive terms. When rumors circulated in 1952 that parliament would attempt to re-elect al-Khuri to a third term, a general strike and the army's course of neutrality compelled him to resign two years before the end of his second term. Whether al-Khuri's successor, President Camille Chamoun, should be permitted to serve a second term was to become a crucial factor in the governmental crisis of 1958.

Despite his limited time in office, the president possesses fairly comprehensive powers. For example, he appoints and dismisses the prime minister and other cabinet ministers, as well as other public officials; he can initiate legislation on grounds of urgency, and has suspensory veto power which only an absolute majority in parliament can overrule. Furthermore, he can dissolve parliament for one month and can call parliament into extraordinary sessions. Although in all of these measures he must consult his ministers, they are subordinate to the president by the nature of their appointment.

Cabinet members, who may or may not be members of parliament, are responsible to both the president and parliament. The Lebanese parliament, known as the Chamber of Deputies, is elected for four years. Its composition is determined by the size of the various religious communities as established by the French in 1920, on a proportion of six Christians to five non-Christians.

The National Pact Between Muslims and Christians

A central feature of the Lebanese political system is a kind of gentleman's agreement arrived at in 1943 between Muslim and Christian leaders of the country and known as the National Pact. According to this unwritten agreement, Lebanon is understood to be an Arab country, but of a special character by virtue of its cultural and spiritual ties with the Christian countries of the West. In foreign policy, Lebanon is expected to adhere to the general orientation and mainstream of Arab international policy; in return, Muslim leaders in Lebanon and the other Arab states are expected to recognize and respect Lebanese independence as a separate state. Thus, with the Maronite Christians agreeing to give up the protection of France and the Christian West and the Muslims agreeing to forgo annexation with Syria and the other Arab states, Lebanon was launched as an independent state.

The National Pact also provided for the distribution of offices and political posts in the Lebanese government in accordance with a special formula based on religion and sometimes called the "confessional" system. This formula requires that the president be a Maronite, the prime minister a Sunni Muslim, and the speaker of the Chamber of Deputies a Shi'i Muslim.⁴

Based upon an interplay of politics and religion often bewildering to the outsider, the confessional system tends to perpetuate strife and tension and gives political processes in Lebanon a parochial and particularistic coloration. The political life of the country is characterized by a fragmentation that results in provincialism and extreme sectarianism. Ideological differences between Lebanese political leaders are usually less important than their religious sect affiliation and family connections.

Cultural Background and Orientation of Lebanese Politics

In general, Lebanese Christians are inclined toward Western political values and institutions, while the Muslims are more oriented toward traditional political concepts. This disparity of outlook is further compounded by differences within the mixture of indigenous political cultures that have been included within the boundaries of the present Lebanese state. Consequently, communication between the various Lebanese communities is restricted and the development of a synthesized national consciousness faces strong resistance.

Lebanese leaders have arrived in the political arena through a wide variety of systems, ranging from the largely patriarchal system where leaders are recruited on the basis of wealth and family lineage, to a religious system where leaders are recruited on the basis of their religious affiliations, to narrow-based oligarchies where leaders are recruited from professional and business groups.^{*} This situation explains the high degree of substitutability of roles in the Lebanese political process. Accordingly, in Lebanon there has been little consensus as to the legitimate ends and means of political action. The intensity and magnitude of political discussion have often had little relationship to actual decision-making in the country.

The manner in which interests are articulated and organized in Lebanon is especially interesting. Informal groupings of a patriarchal or communal character have been persistent in Lebanese political life. Thus the character of political issues is largely determined by religious and clan groupings. On the other hand, associational interest groups, such as labor unions and chambers of commerce, have not been an integral part of the political process. Hence, particular economic or occupational interests are generally latent and are expressed indirectly through clan or religious associations and institutional interest groups, such as the army and bureaucracy.

^{*}For an explanation of the theoretical framework underlying this description, including such concepts as "political recruitment," "interest articulation," and "associational interest groups," see Gabriel A. Almond and James S. Coleman (eds.), The Politics of the Developing Areas (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1960).

Major Political Factions

A cursory view of the aims and purposes of the major political factions in Lebanon at the time of the insurgency reveals the nature and character of the political system which came apart in 1958. Most of Lebanon's political groups are not parties in the Western sense of the term. They are all based on religious or clan foundations and often have little or no ideological content. They have very narrow bases of popular support and serve essentially as vehicles for competition between different leaders or between different regions of the country. Some of these political groups are formed for limited objectives and they often disappear when their objectives are achieved. Some of the important parties and groupings in 1958 were the Ba'ath, Progressive Socialist, Najjadah, Phalanges Libanaises, Communist, National Organization, Constitutional Union, National Bloc, and Parti Populaire Syrien, also known as the Syrian Social National Party.

The Ba'ath, or Arab Resurrection Party, had spread throughout the Middle East from its birthplace in Syria. Standing for Pan-Arabism, the Ba'ath appealed mainly to young Muslims and, to a lesser extent, the Christian intelligentsia. Led by Jibran Majdalani and Abdul Majid al-Rafi'i, it drew its chief support in southern Lebanon and in the northern Lebanese cities of Tripoli and Baalbek.

The Progressive Socialist party, under the leadership of Kamal Jumblatt, a Druze feudal chieftain, drew most of its membership from the Druze sect in central and southern Lebanon. While it allegedly stood for democracy, socialism, and a purely secular state, in reality its orientation was based on its leaders' changing and fluctuating whims.

The most militant and radical Muslim group was the Najjadah, a Pan-Islamic group which advocated the amalgamation of Lebanon with the United Arab Republic. The Najjadah, which had a strong emotional appeal to traditionalistic Muslim youths of the lower classes, was primarily a youth movement of paramilitary nature, guided by Adnan al-Hakim.

The Phalanges Libanaises, the Christian counterpart of the Najjadah, stood for the preservation of Lebanese sovereignty. Organized around the personality of Pierre Jumayyil, it found its chief exponents in the Beirut area and in the Metn area.

The illegal Communist party, led by Faraj-Allah al-Hulu, had underground headquarters in Beirut with branches in Sidon, Tripoli, Tyre, and Baalbek. Alienated intellectuals and some university students were attracted to the party, which actually had very little to do with the 1958 insurgency.

The National Organization, led by Rafiq Naja, represented Islamic mercantile and bourgeois interests; its chief supporters were found in Beirut. The Constitutional Union, under the leadership of former President Bisharah al-Khuri, was composed of Christian mercantile interests of Beirut. Another segment of Christian mercantile interests, organized by Raymond Edde, was the National Bloc.

The Parti Populaire Syrien (PPS), led by Asad al-Ashqar, included in its following professional, civil service, and army personnel and some students, as well as some discontented and youthful revolutionary groups. It advocated immediate unity with Syria, based on Syrian rather than Arab nationalism.⁶ One of the oldest and most militant ideological parties in Lebanon, the PPS had branches in Syria, Jordan, and Iraq. The object of official persecution in Syria and Iraq, the PPS was actively opposed in Lebanon by religious sects, both Muslim and Christian, the feudal interests, the Communists, the Pan-Arabists, and Lebanese nationalists. Its support of the Chamoun government in 1958 was purely a tactical alliance aimed at preventing a Pan-Arabist union of Lebanon with other Arab states whose governments were inimical to the PPS.⁶

Muslim-Christian Friction Feeds Opposition to President Chamoun

Although the Arab national movement had been strongly supported by Lebanese Christians at the beginning of this century, by the 1950's the majority of the Christian Lebanese tended to view Pan-Arabism with apprehension. They felt that its effect would be to reduce them to the status of second-class citizens. Lebanese Muslims, on the other hand, resented that so many of the best and most influential positions in Lebanon's civil service, army, and private enterprise were controlled by Christians. They also complained of lack of educational opportunities.

The Muslims felt that the composition of government should reflect the numerical ratio of actual religious affiliation, which they claimed had now shifted in their favor. The position of the Muslim prime minister, they stated, should have more power, and the powers of the Christian president should be reduced. In Muslim eyes, Lebanon's Arab orientation was being compromised by attempts to increase Western influence in the country. They sought administrative decentralization and termination of what they alleged to be political corruption in President Camille Chamoun's administration.⁷

Charges of political corruption have been commonplace in Lebanese history, but Chamoun's actions, which had succeeded in antagonizing most of the influential leaders of the country, focused particular attention on governmental mismanagement during his term of office. Eventually there was hardly a leader of any influence who remained friendly to President Chamoun, and political groups began to assume a definite anti-government orientation. Chamoun's bid for a second term, illustrated by his attempts to amend the Constitution to allow for presidential succession to another term in office, together with his purge of traditional political leaders, probably acted as a principal factor in the insurgency.

Cold War Issues Contribute to the Growing Disaffection

A contributing factor was Chamoun's foreign policy, which emphasized close collaboration with the West at a time when most Arab governments had adopted a strong neutralist posture in

the cold war confrontation. Chamoun's support of the pro-Western Prime Minister of Iraq, Nuri as-Said, in the latter's quarrel with President Gamal Abdul Nasser of Egypt and the United Arab Republic, aroused further dissatisfaction.

Opposition to Chamoun's administration started as early as 1955, with the formation of the Baghdad Pact, when Lebanon was debating its stance toward this complex pro-Western military alliance. The first opposition spokesman was the Progressive Socialist leader, Kamal Jumblatt, who accused the Chamoun administration of preparing to join the pact.⁸ Lebanon did not in fact join the Baghdad Pact, but Muslim suspicions of Chamoun's intentions were aroused over the issue.

The combined Israeli and Anglo-French attack on Egypt in the Suez crisis of 1956 was also the cause of intense anti-government feeling in Lebanon. Chamoun's refusal either to join other Arab states in active support of Egypt or to break diplomatic relations with Britain and France was the starting point of a tragic series of developments which were to culminate in the insurgency of 1958.

Although no official statement was issued, it was generally understood that Lebanese Prime Minister Abdallah al-Yafi's cabinet had been sharply divided on the policy to be pursued by Lebanon in the Suez crisis. Whereas Yafi and Minister Without Portfolio Sa'ib Salam were thought to have urged that diplomatic relations with Britain and France be broken off almost immediately after the Beirut meeting of the Arab heads of state, President Chamoun was believed to have resisted the pressure to break off relations with the European governments. In any case, Chamoun apparently considered that his ministers were deliberately seeking to embarrass him and he accordingly put pressure upon them to resign, which they did.

The next fateful step in the Lebanese drama occurred on March 16, 1957, when Chamoun declared Lebanon's adherence to the Eisenhower doctrine, under which Middle Eastern governments might call upon the United States to intervene militarily in their defense.

Chamoun's Political Opposition Forms the United National Front

This act closed the ranks of the different factions of opposition and led to the formation of the United National Front (UNF) in April 1957. The establishment of the UNF created an impressive anti-government force combining 23 influential political leaders and including such men as Sa'ib Salam, Kamal Jumblatt, Rashid Karami, Husayn al-Uwayni, Ali al-Bazzi, Ilyas al-Khuri, Phillipe Taqla, Henri Far'un and Ghassan al-Tuwayni. The United National Front brought together the Najjadah, National Organization, Progressive Socialist, Ba'ath, and other political factions. Later, the Congress of Parties was formed as a spokesman for all opposition views, including other anti-government factions not members of the UNF. The initial aim of the UNF and other anti-government groups was simply to oppose Chamoun's administration.

The Ba'athists drew heavily upon the support of their strong organization in Syria and were assisted by the Communist underground, which helped the Ba'ath to organize and administer rebel quarters in Beirut. The Najjadah also threw its full weight in support of the insurrection, and Jumblatt's Progressive Socialist party assumed a central role in the growing insurgency. Finally, the Arab Nationalist Movement, which was not a political party but a loose and socially heterogeneous movement of Muslim intellectuals advocating Arab union, supported anti-government groups.

President Chamoun Wins at the Polls and Takes a Pro-Western Position

General elections for the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies were held in June 1957 during a critical period in which several incidents and serious rioting occurred. The result was an overwhelming victory for Chamoun supporters and a correspondingly heavy defeat for the UNF opposition parties led by Sa'ib Salam. It was now widely believed that Chamoun would use what the opposition called a "packed parliament" to amend the constitutional provision limiting a president to a single term, in order to keep himself in office for another six years, if not for his lifetime.⁹

The new cabinet, formed on August 18, was led by Sami al-Suluh and included the strongly pro-Western Charles Malik as foreign minister. Whether Chamoun's appointment of Malik was merely an immediate reaction to his clash with Yafi and Salam or grew out of a longstanding drive to change Lebanese foreign policy is not clear. In any event, Malik's swift and unqualified support of the Eisenhower doctrine split the country into two hostile camps. Among Arabs the Eisenhower doctrine was widely regarded as being aimed against Nasser and the Pan-Arabist policy he espoused. Malik's decision violated a cardinal principle of the Lebanese National Pact regarding foreign policy, namely, that in any international issue Lebanon must never side with the West against the Arab states.

INSURGENCY

The spark which touched off armed conflict between the opposition forces and the Chamoun government was the murder of Nasib al-Matni, the Maronite Christian publisher of the left-wing newspaper Telegraf, on May 8, 1958. On the following day the United National Front declared a general strike throughout the country and demanded the immediate resignation of President Chamoun.

Aims and Early Operations of the UNF

The avowed aim of the UNF at this stage of the revolt was to bring about the resignation of Chamoun and the holding of new parliamentary elections, followed by a reversal of the country's

pro-Western alignment. The leaders of the movement have denied charges that they wanted to unite Lebanese territory with Nasser's United Arab Republic and adopt a pro-Soviet foreign policy. Apparently enthusiasm for Nasser varied widely among insurgent groups and their leaders, who were in complete agreement only in their opposition to the Chamoun regime.¹⁰

In the initial phase of the crisis, the opposition consisted of both organized political groups and elements drawn from the streets. The insurrection itself actually began with rioting and street warfare in the cities, and this spread into the countryside near Tripoli, Sidon, Hirmil, Baalbek, and other isolated areas, ultimately taking the form of overt guerrilla warfare. No areas were under absolute insurgent control; however, most of the old sector of Beirut, known as al-Basta, the al-Mansuri Mosque area of Tripoli, and the Sidon and Shuf areas to the south of Beirut were within the insurgents' sphere of influence.

As still legal political parties in opposition to the Chamoun government, the Lebanese insurgents did not need to develop a genuine underground organization. Many of the functions of an underground were performed quite openly by the opposition groups brought together by the UNF.

Psychological warfare, for example, was carried on by open as well as clandestine mass media. Insurgent propaganda was expressed in two important Beirut newspapers, al-Siyasah and Beirut al-Masa. The insurgent Voice of Free Lebanon began broadcasting on May 16, 1958. Through continuous broadcasts the Lebanese people were called upon to revolt against President Chamoun, who was branded a criminal and "a stooge of Western imperialism." In June 1958, in Beirut, the Najjadah Party established a new radio station, the Voice of Arabism, which transmitted in Arabic, French, English, and Armenian. In late August, a third anti-government radio station, the Voice of the Revolution, appeared in Beirut. Press and radio propaganda from Cairo and Damascus was also very important in fanning the flames of insurgency in Lebanon.

Sporadic acts of terrorism were committed in many Lebanese cities during the summer of 1958. Terrorists working for the insurgents succeeded in infiltrating government-controlled areas, planting bombs and dynamite, and generally creating chaotic conditions. Although at the peak of insurgent activity as many as 50 explosions took place daily, the number of casualties remained small. It appears that bombs and explosives were planted only when it was reasonably certain that premises were vacant.

Insurgents' Military Organization and Leadership

The military organization of the insurgents remained loose and decentralized. At the outbreak of the rebellion there were three separate commands, later unified under Mu'in Hammud. After the arrest of Hammud, Sa'ib Salam assumed chairmanship and formed a number of committees, including a Finance Committee headed by Husayn al-Uwayni.

In Tripoli, the leadership of the insurgency was taken over by Rashid Karami, who established an eight-man Central Command to make policy decisions and direct local insurgent activities, as well as an Executive Committee, headed by Tal'at Kurim, and a Revolutionary Court.

In Sidon, the insurgency was controlled by Maruf Saad, with Salah Sa'ad acting as his principal adviser and subordinate. Various committees such as Finance, Ordnance, Internal Security, and Publicity were established.

In the Shuf area, Kamal Jumblatt assumed the leadership of the insurgents, who constituted the best organized anti-government force. It has been claimed that they were trained and supplied with military materiel by Syrian army officers. Jumblatt established various administrative units, with his home town, al-Mukatarah, as his base of operations.

In the Baalbek and Hirmil areas there was no unified command. Here the leadership was divided among several local political leaders, with little or no coordination.

Internal Support: Recruitment, Training, and Logistics

The Communists sided with the insurgents but their help was seldom sought; to most rebel leaders, the Communists proved to be an embarrassing ally.¹¹ While the vast majority of the Muslims supported the insurgency, the Christian population was split, with some Christians aiding the insurgents or at least remaining neutral in the struggle.

There were apparently no regular recruiting centers. In general, recruits were drawn from the population living in rebel-dominated areas in the cities and from the followers of chiefs in the countryside. Most rural inhabitants supported their traditional leaders, and cases of individuals changing allegiance were extremely rare.

While some of the recruits received limited military training, there is no evidence of elaborate training camps in any of the insurgent areas. Political indoctrination of the insurgent fighting force was conducted through mass media controlled by the rebels and by word-of-mouth communication from tribal chiefs sympathetic to the insurgents.

Local logistic support varied from one insurgent sector to another. In the cities of Beirut, Tripoli, and Sidon there were a number of fixed bases. The equipment of the rebels consisted of rifles, machineguns, mortars, grenades, and bazookas. Initially rebel forces in Beirut suffered a shortage of ammunition, but the insurgent leadership later established a workshop in Beirut which produced arms and ammunition. Additional weapons were captured from loyalist forces.

External Support for the Insurgents—Advantages and Disadvantages

Most of the insurgents' external aid came from the United Arab Republic—Egypt and Syria. President Chamoun claimed that Lebanese insurgent forces were trained by Syrian military

officers. He further alleged that recruitment offices were established in Damascus under the direction of Bourhane Adham, a Syrian army officer, and in Homs under the direction of Abdul Hakim, another Syrian officer. The government also accused the Syrians and Egyptians of furnishing the rebels with military materiel, volunteers, and about 200 million Syrian pounds.¹² The material aid furnished by the United Arab Republic to the insurgents appears to have been effective mainly in the Baalbek and Hirmil areas.

The most important result of external aid may have been to raise the morale of the rebel forces. It did not appreciably change the course of the insurgency, but it did enable the Chamoun government to make political capital of the fact that some aid had been given, in order to convince the United States that Lebanon was in danger of being invaded by the United Arab Republic and pro-Soviet factions. United Nations representatives in Lebanon did not support the Chamoun government in its charges of UAR involvement.

Military Operations

Insurgent strategy and tactics differed from one area to another. In the cities, fighting was largely confined to sporadic street clashes, planting time bombs, and throwing hand grenades. In Beirut the only heavy fighting occurred in mid-June when the residence of the Prime Minister was burned and that of the President subjected to heavy fire. In Tripoli fighting assumed greater intensity; the city became a virtual battlefield, with heavy shelling by the insurgents and extensive use of machineguns. In the countryside a few pitched battles were fought, with official buildings, installations, and police outposts as targets.

The rebels held several strategically important positions, such as Mount Lebanon, which was very difficult to attack but relatively easy to defend. Here Jumblatt's forces could harass loyalist attackers almost at will. Similarly, the rebels were strong, if not very well coordinated, along the Syrian border, across which they got supplies and reinforcements. This made it nearly impossible for the government to quell the insurgents in this area.

The most important battles occurred early in the insurgency, at Bayt al-Din between May 13 and 16, at Fraydis on June 9 and 10, and when Jumblatt attempted to occupy Beirut on June 30. During the period of June 30-July 5, Jumblatt mounted a major offensive centered upon the village of Qabr Shmuel and the Beirut International Airport near the capital. With the defeat of Jumblatt's forces in early July, the military action of the insurgency was virtually ended, although political intrigues continued throughout the summer.

Except in the Shuf sector, the Lebanese insurgency was less than a full-scale civil war, but it was definitely more than street rioting and mass demonstrations.

Insurgent Strength Is Unknown, and Casualties Remain Estimates

It is difficult to determine the strength of the insurgent forces; however, the insurgents had the support of most of the inhabitants in rebel-controlled areas. There are indications that Tripoli had the largest insurgent force. In the cities, rebel strength declined with the passage of time. In the countryside, however, where rebel chiefs appeared to have succeeded in recruiting most male adults of military age, insurgent forces continued to gain strength with the progress of the insurgency.¹³

There are no reliable figures available on insurgent casualties; only occasional communiqués on insurgent clashes with government forces were issued, with each side giving a different estimate of casualties. It is reasonably safe to conclude, however, that the number of insurgent dead and wounded for the entire period did not exceed 3,000 and might be closer to 2,000.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

The first clashes between government forces and the insurgents occurred in Tripoli on May 9, 1958, but it was not until May 12, when violence reached Beirut, that the Chamoun government seemed to have recognized the gravity of the crisis. By that time, barricades had gone up in most of the principal towns, dividing government-held areas from rebel-controlled zones. Although bomb explosions and sporadic bursts of gunfire became daily occurrences, there were at first no serious confrontations between loyalist forces and the insurgents. The outbreak of armed insurgency nevertheless soon reduced the government to a state of political chaos and military paralysis.

President Chamoun attempted to win support from the Christian element of the population by putting the crisis in a Muslim-Christian context. Most of the Maronite clergy and a majority of the Christians generally supported the government throughout the rebellion. Some Christian leaders, however, sided with the insurgents, and others remained neutral. The Maronite Patriarch, for example, withheld his support of the Chamoun regime and insisted on a negotiated settlement with the insurgents.¹⁴

The Army's Role as Neutral Arbitrator

Before the outbreak of hostilities, the commander of the 7,000-man Lebanese army, Gen. Fuad Chehab, had warned President Chamoun that, in the event of such an insurgency, the army would not be in a position to resist double pressures from outside the country and from rebel agitation inside the country. Chehab feared that if his army—itsself balanced precariously between Christian and Muslim troops—participated in this civil fight, it would actually fall apart.¹⁵ By withholding full support from the government, Chehab may have actually contributed indirectly to the outbreak of the rebellion. Once violence began, the army, regarding the crisis as a power

struggle among politicians, refused to commit itself to either side. It assumed instead the role of arbitrator between the government and the opposition, trying to protect both sides from total defeat and to minimize the scope of hostilities.

Only when insurgent attacks became too intense did the army and air force intervene, but they never put themselves at the complete disposal of President Chamoun. For example, when rebel forces threatened the Beirut International Airport in early June, the army went into action and carried the day for the counterinsurgent side. Army units also saw action against the insurgents in Tripoli. Yet, at the same time in Beirut, army units prevented the police from entering rebel sectors of the capital. The army also imposed strict press censorship—which allowed the press to criticize both sides, but not the army.

The Government Depends on Paramilitary Forces

Because of the army's neutrality, the counterinsurgents faced acute military problems. Except for poorly trained and equipped gendarmes, the government had at its disposal only loyalist civilians who had been hastily organized into paramilitary units. Coordination of these forces was difficult.

Counterinsurgent forces consisted of the Phalanges Libanaises, the Parti Populaire Syrien, a few Druzes, and other pro-Chamoun elements, who were organized to fight for the government in the countryside, together with the gendarmes of the national police force, which was generally loyal to the government during the crisis. The major figures were Naim Mughabghab; Majid Arslan, Minister of Defense; Pierre Jumayyil, leader of the Phalanges Libanaises; Qahtan Hamadah; and PPS leader Asad al-Ashqar. These men were politicians who led their followers in support of the Chamoun administration.

The militant Christian and pro-Chamoun party of Pierre Jumayyil, Phalanges Libanaises, had a total of about 40,000 members and sympathizers, but few of these had any military training. Though not particularly useful in field operations, the Phalangists were active in Beirut and other cities, where they erected barricades and bore the brunt of the street fighting.

Asad al-Ashqar's militant and disciplined Parti Populaire Syrien, which backed Chamoun against their common enemies, had some 3,000 armed and well-trained men in the field and has been called the backbone of the loyalist forces. The PPS received its weapons from Iraq and Lebanese army supply depots and had a well-established training center at Nabi Uthman¹⁶ until rebel attacks broke up the camp. There was a serious political problem involved in the government's use of PPS troops, however, since most of the regular army personnel thoroughly disliked the PPS and distrusted its political leadership.

An Estimate of Pro-Government Strengths and Casualties

Total troop strength of counterinsurgent forces has been placed at around 6,000, including 2,000 gendarmes, 3,000 PPS fighting men, and about 1,000 others. In actual battles, however,

the number of pro-government forces often exceeded these figures. For example, there were some 9,000 loyalists involved in the defense of the Beirut International Airport, including gendarmes and PPS troops, with some Iraqi and Jordanian members; as the battle progressed, more than 1,000 soldiers from the regular Lebanese army joined in on the counterinsurgent side.

The exact number of counterinsurgent casualties is not known. However, the following figures were publicized for a few of the conflicts which took place. In the first riots that broke out in Tripoli, following the murder of al-Matni, the official casualty figures listed 13 dead and 110 injured from May 9 to May 11. Loyalist casualties in Tripoli during the rebellion were 108 killed and several hundred wounded, more than rebel casualties there. In the battle of the Beirut International Airport, claims of 300 Loyalists killed or wounded were made, while some observers felt casualties were far smaller. These figures, however, were not denied by the government.

Operations of the Army and Paramilitary Forces

The military tactics of the counterinsurgents were adapted to the local situation. In the cities, the gendarmes and Phalangists were used to enforce curfews, make arrests, erect barricades, and otherwise control the population and protect government positions. Police units were sometimes employed tactically against rebel-held sectors. In Beirut, where heavy fighting began in mid-June, the army used aircraft to reconnoiter rebel areas but at the same time denied the police free access to these areas. The government expelled several thousand Syrians whom it accused of aiding the insurgents. Only in Tripoli was there heavy fighting involving the regular army.

In the countryside, a few pitched battles were fought in which tanks, automatic weapons, machineguns, and mortars were used by both sides. When the regular army did become involved in the fighting, as in the battles of Fraydis and Ayn Zahalta on June 9 and 10 and at the International Airport, armored columns and air support were made available to the counterinsurgents.

In the Shuf area, the government organized a paramilitary force consisting of gendarmes and civilian loyalists to oppose Jumblatt's insurgent force. Here the supporters of Chamoun and the followers of Christian chiefs who saw the insurgency as a religious war were equipped with rifles, automatic weapons, armored cars, artillery, and various military transport vehicles which they received from local army supply depots.

The official radio network was at the government's disposal, and this medium was used to jam inflammatory broadcasts from Syria and the United Arab Republic, as well as to broadcast counterinsurgent propaganda. Syrian and Egyptian newspapers were also banned, and strict censorship of the Lebanese press was enforced by the army, which looked with disfavor

on the extremists of either side. Two pro-government newspapers which were permitted by the army to operate throughout the summer were the Voice of Reform, published by the PPS, and the Voice of Lebanon, controlled by the Phalangists.

The Government Seeks External Support

Lacking the means of militarily ending the insurgency, the government was forced to choose another course of action. Since it regarded the insurgency as a domestic governmental crisis into which foreign Arab interests had injected themselves, the government attempted to find outside aid to help it regain control of the situation. Claiming massive intervention by the United Arab Republic in support of the rebels, Lebanon complained first to the Arab League and later to the United Nations.

As the Lebanese crisis became the focus of the cold war, it acquired all the attributes that have characterized East-West confrontations. The United States and its allies denounced the insurgency as a Communist plot designed to compromise the territorial integrity of Lebanon. The Soviet Union responded by blaming the entire crisis on "Western imperialism," particularly that of the United States, the United Kingdom, and France. The United Arab Republic sharply denounced the Western powers, accusing them of instigating turmoil in Lebanon. India supported the position of the United Arab Republic in the United Nations, as did Burma, Indonesia, Yugoslavia, and other neutralist powers.

The United Nations Investigates

In early June, the U.N. Security Council sent a team of observers into the country to investigate the charges of the Lebanese government. Composed of U.N. representatives from the Scandinavian countries, Italy, Netherlands, Canada, India, and other neutral nations, the United Nations Observer Group in Lebanon (UNOGIL) arrived on June 12 and remained until November. The team of several hundred U.N. observers, headed by Maj. Gen. Odd Bull of Norway and former Ecuadoran President Galo Plaza, set about its mission of investigating Syrian, Egyptian, and other foreign influences in the country, by patrolling government-held roads and areas and making air reconnaissance flights over rebel areas.

By mid-July the U.N. observers had gained freedom of access throughout the country, including rebel areas, and were able to report that they had found no hard evidence of the kind of massive infiltration and arms-smuggling across the Syrian border which the Chamoun government had charged. U.N. Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld reported that the Lebanese question was, by and large, an internal matter.¹⁸

By this time, the military phase of the insurgency was virtually over, but the political crisis continued unabated, with the insurgents now demanding the immediate resignation of Chamoun, although the government had already announced soon after the outbreak of violence

that it had no intention of asking for a constitutional amendment to allow the President a second term in office.

A Coup in Iraq Involves the United States and Great Britain in Lebanese Crisis

In the midst of this political deadlock, a swift and unexpected turn of events in Baghdad introduced a new factor into the Lebanese crisis, when the pro-Western Iraqi government of Nuri al-Said was overthrown by a military coup which in Western eyes threatened the stability of the entire Middle East. Throughout the 1950's, Nuri al-Said had been the only prominent Arab leader to oppose Nasser. The revolution in Iraq was viewed by the U.S. and British governments as the opening gambit in Nasser's drive to eliminate their interests from the Middle East and to incorporate Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq into the United Arab Republic.

The Chamoun government had appealed to the United States on several occasions for military assistance and even direct intervention under the Eisenhower doctrine, on the grounds that Lebanon's territorial integrity and national independence were threatened by foreign forces. In the wake of the sudden revolutionary upheaval in Iraq, the United States and Britain decided to act. On the afternoon of July 15, U.S. forces, which had been concentrated in the eastern Mediterranean theater since May, began landing in the Beirut area. Simultaneously, 2,500 British troops were flown to 'Amman, capital of Jordan, to stabilize the adjacent area.¹⁹

The U.S. Commitment in Lebanon

Taking the position that the government headed by President Chamoun was Lebanon's legitimate political authority, the United States used its military power to protect the regime from violent overthrow, but at the same time it employed diplomatic and political pressures on Lebanese leaders to bring about a solution to the governmental crisis acceptable to both sides. Primary responsibility for this delicate task was entrusted to Under Secretary of State Robert Murphy, whom President Eisenhower sent to Lebanon as his special political representative. Murphy urged Chamoun—whom he found a "tired and worried man," fearful of assassination and a virtual self-made prisoner for the past 67 days—to hold a presidential election without delay; and, in a series of meetings, he reassured insurgent leaders that the U.S. presence was not to support Chamoun personally.²⁰

The overall mission of U.S. forces in Lebanon was to safeguard the lives and property of Americans there, prevent the overthrow of the Lebanese government, protect its members, and provide a stabilizing influence in the country. U.S. President Dwight David Eisenhower wished to demonstrate U.S. willingness to act in support of its friends.²¹

U.S. Commanders, Relations With Lebanese, Strength, Casualties, and Cost

Although the Lebanese insurgents bitterly denounced the landing and threatened to meet the Americans with armed force, the military operation proceeded peacefully and without physical resistance. When the Lebanese army commander, Gen. Fuad Chehab, demanded that the U.S. marines remain aboard ship, Marine Commander Brig. Gen. Sidney Scott Wade postponed deployment for one hour, while U.S. Ambassador Robert M. McClintock and Adm. James L. Holloway, Jr., in overall command of the Lebanese operation, met with General Chehab and other Lebanese representatives to work out a compromise on details of the landing. It was decided that U.S. forces would secure and remain in the port area of Beirut and a zone around the Beirut International Airport and along a communications corridor between these points.

Relations with the Lebanese people were generally good, despite the high degree of tension in the crisis atmosphere of the country. The U.S. air force dropped a million leaflets throughout the country explaining why American forces were in Lebanon.²² The Lebanese army functioned as a buffer between American forces and the insurgents, especially in the al-Basta area of Beirut. Cooperation between U.S. and Lebanese forces was symbolized in the joint teams of American and Lebanese military personnel which began patrolling the city within a few days after the landing. Later, the United States held a series of field exercises in which Lebanese officers and soldiers were included as observers for training purposes.

From an initial landing force of some 5,000, the total number of U.S. troops in Lebanon reached almost 15,000 by the middle of August. Of these, about 6,000 were marines and more than 8,000 were in the army, under the command of Maj. Gen. Paul D. Adams. The operation was efficiently conducted and is generally regarded as a successful show of military force to accomplish a political objective. With the exception of one American killed by a sniper bullet, there were no casualties among U.S. forces. These remained in Lebanon until October: the last troops and tanks were withdrawn on the 25th. The cost of this 102-day operation has been set at \$200 million.²³

Other External Assistance

According to the claims of Lebanese insurgents, the Chamoun regime received large quantities of military aid, not only from the United States, but also from Great Britain, Turkey, Iraq, Jordan, and Bahrain. The facts are not clear, but it appears that whatever military aid may have been given the counterinsurgents by these latter countries was negligible. Most of the foreign assistance was in the form of unofficial volunteers from Arab countries, along with a small amount of weapons and ammunition. Foreign military casualties have been listed as 55 Bahrainis, 32 Jordanians, and 17 Iraqis.

The Crisis Ends When General Chehab Is Elected President

As the military crisis abated under the stabilizing effect of the U.S. troops, the government continued its efforts to deal with the political crisis--efforts which had begun as early as May 25, when Prime Minister Sami al-Sulh announced that the government did not intend to press for Chamoun's re-election by parliament. Realizing that opposition to Chamoun still lay at the root of the insurgency, moderate leaders of parliament, the army, and the fairness community resolved to bring about the election of a new chief of state who would have the support of both government and opposition elements. When the Maronite Patriarch suggested the candidacy of Gen. Fuad Chehab, the Maronite Christian commander in chief of the neutral army, moderates on both sides of the controversy were able to support his candidacy. Chehab eventually agreed to run and was elected on July 31, 1958, by a 48 to 7 vote in the Chamber of Deputies.

The election of General Chehab with the support of both pro-government and opposition members of parliament ushered in a transitional period during which moderate elements gradually regained control of the situation. Curfew and curfew restrictions were lifted, the general strike in partial effect since May was called off, and the economic life of the country began to return to normal. By the middle of August, the first stage of a phased withdrawal of American troops began.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

General Chehab took the oath as President of the Lebanese Republic on September 23. In his inaugural address he appealed for unity among the various sections of the population, declaring that there would be "no victors and no vanquished" and that Lebanon must strive toward a situation that would facilitate the withdrawal of foreign troops, improve relations with her sister Arab countries, and restore the national economy of the country. Appointed Prime Minister by the new President, Rashid Karami, the leader of the insurgency in Tripoli, formed a cabinet drawn both from members of the opposition and from moderate elements.

Great resentment was aroused among Chamoun's supporters by Chehab's choice of "a man from the barricades," as they termed Karami, and on September 25 they called for the continuation of the general strike as a protest against the new government. By this time, however, Arab nationalists were anxious for a settlement in Lebanon. They had achieved their main objective, which was to prevent Chamoun from buying another term in office and to secure Lebanon's repudiation of the Eisenhower doctrine. On October 15, Karami formed a new coalition government consisting of leaders from both sides of the conflict.

Resolution of the Issues and Examination of the U.S. Role

This brought peace between the two contending factions, and the Lebanese crisis came to an end. The new Karami government renounced the Eisenhower doctrine, and diplomatic relations with the United Arab Republic were restored. The independence of Lebanon was reaffirmed, and Egypt's Abdul Nasser publicly denied any wish to unite Lebanon with the United Arab Republic, unless by the voluntary and genuine desire of the Lebanese people. By the end of October, the last American troops had left Beirut.

The presence of U.S. troops in Lebanon during the crisis summer of 1958 has generally been regarded as having had a positive influence on the course of events. Troop conduct was exemplary, and the mutual cooperation of both military and political officers gave evidence of U.S. abilities to play a difficult role in a complex case of counterinsurgency. U.S. policy and actions to restore peace and order demonstrated both that the United States could take a genuinely realistic attitude and that it was not imperialistic. On the one hand, U.S. forces were never used in tactical operations against the rebels nor did they support Chamoun's ambitions for a second term; on the other hand, they stood by to protect the legal government in its capital city of Beirut. In this respect, the U.S. military role was analogous to that of the Lebanese army. The United States thus exercised a decisive effect as a mediator by imposing a cooling-off period on the violent passions of both sides. During this period the contending factions found a community of interests, not the least of which was a growing desire for the withdrawal of foreign forces from their country and a return to "business as usual" conditions.

Economic Effects of the Insurgency and the Continuation of Underlying Political Issues

The Lebanese insurrection had paralyzed production in the agricultural and industrial sectors of the economy and caused a complete breakdown of trade. Tourism, the backbone of the Lebanese economy, suffered a considerable setback. Communication facilities were destroyed and public property had suffered much damage. Between 2,000 and 3,000 Lebanese had been killed and injured in the rioting and fighting that took place in the five months of the insurgency.

In the long run, Lebanon may find itself again in a crisis. The political settlement that ended the insurgency was brought about mainly by outside pressures, and there was no guarantee that the problems underlying the insurgency would be solved by the new government. Religious, political, and social tensions remained high, and the socioeconomic grievances of the Muslims were not satisfied. Mutual mistrust between Christians and Muslims has not been completely allayed. There is no doubt that there has long existed in Lebanon a considerable body of Christian opinion with genuine, deeply rooted reservations concerning its relations with the Arab hinterland. It is also certain that there existed in the 1950's between Arab nationalists in Lebanon and in the United Arab Republic the same interaction and community of feeling that existed between Nasser and Pan-Arab nationalists elsewhere.

However, there is no indication or proof that the Arab nationalists in Lebanon were unaware of that country's unique position in the Arab world, nor is there evidence to indicate that Lebanese Arab nationalists generally desired or worked to bring about Lebanon's union with Egypt and Syria. This is not surprising, for even an attempted merger might lead to the partition of Lebanon, and this would be an unqualified disaster for Arab nationalism. The setting up of any new non-Arab state in the Middle East would appear to be the "ultimate vindication of Israel" and would establish a dangerous precedent for the solution of minority issues throughout the Arab world. Arab fears see any partition leading to a Western-oriented, Christian Lebanon as constituting a permanent base against the Islamic Arab world. Above all, the breakup of Lebanon along religious lines would deal a decisive blow to contemporary Arab nationalism, since the implications of such a development run directly contrary to the modern Arab's cherished goal of a secular state.

In the short run, the political settlement reached in October of 1958 appears effective. Most Lebanese leaders realized the futility of the insurrection, which threatened and challenged the country's traditional pattern of cultural diversity and a foreign policy orientation of strict neutrality. The new government put together by President Chehab and Prime Minister Karami was a coalition with a slight majority of insurgent politicians. General Chehab enjoyed great popular prestige in the country. As of mid-1964, which marked the end of President Chehab's term of office, Lebanon's political system appeared to be stable and viable.

The Lebanese crisis demonstrated to the Lebanese and the Arab world, as well as to the Great Powers, that so long as Lebanon existed under its current ethnic composition it had no choice but to maintain a pragmatic role: in any Arab-Western confrontation Lebanon would be on the side of the Arabs, and in any inter-Arab rivalry Lebanon would remain neutral.

NOTES

- ¹ For a detailed discussion of minorities, see A. Hourani, Minorities in the Arab World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947).
- ² Reader Bullard (ed.), Middle East: A Political and Economic Survey (3d ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 537.
- ³ William Persen, "Lebanese Economic Development Since 1950," Middle East Journal, XII (Summer 1958), pp. 277-94.
- ⁴ H. B. Sharabi, Government and Politics of the Middle East in the Twentieth Century (New York: Van Nostrand, 1962), pp. 137-38.
- ⁵ For detailed discussion of Lebanese political parties, see T. Maqdisi and L. George, al-Ahzab al-Siyasiyah fi Lubnan 'am 1959 (Political Parties in Lebanon in 1959) (Beirut: Publications of the newspaper L'Orient, 1959); and B. A. Aridi, "Parties and Politics in Lebanese Society," (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, The American University, Washington, D.C.).
- ⁶ Sharabi, Government and Politics, pp. 143-44.
- ⁷ See Kamal Jumblatt, Haqiqat al-Thawrah al-Lubnaniyah (The Truth About the Lebanese Revolution) (Beirut: Dar al-Nashr al-Arabiyyah, 1959).
- ⁸ For a detailed discussion of Lebanese foreign policy, see Fuad Ammun, Siyasat Lubnan al-Kharijiyah (The Foreign Policy of Lebanon) (Beirut: Dar al-Nashr al-Arabiyyah, 1959).
- ⁹ William Adams, "Lebanon: The Frustrated Civil War," The Reporter, XIX (August 7, 1958), 17.
- ¹⁰ G. Barraclough, Survey of International Affairs, 1956-1958 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1962), pp. 369-70.
- ¹¹ See also Robert Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors (Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1964), p. 404.
- ¹² Camille Chamoun, Crise au Moyen-Orient (Paris: Gallimard, 1963), pp. 412-14.
- ¹³ Ibid., pp. 71-88.
- ¹⁴ Sharabi, Government and Politics, p. 146.
- ¹⁵ Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors, pp. 400-401.
- ¹⁶ From a highly placed source in the Lebanese Embassy in Washington, D.C.
- ¹⁷ These figures are based on Lebanese press information covering this period.
- ¹⁸ United Nations, Security Council, Official Record, 13th Year Supplement for July, August, and September 1958, Docs. S/4040 and Add. 1, S/4043, S/4052, S/4060, S/4085, and S/4100; Supplement for October, November, and December 1958, Doc. S/4114 (New York, 1958-1959); Barraclough, Survey, p. 372.
- ¹⁹ Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors, p. 400.
- ²⁰ Ibid., pp. 400, 404-406.
- ²¹ Ibid., p. 398.
- ²² "Chronology, July 1-September 15, 1958," Middle East Journal, XII (Autumn 1958), pp. 430-36.

20 Murphy, Diplomat Among Warriors, pp. 408-409.

21 Hans Morgenthau, "The Lebanese Disaster," The New Republic, CXXXIX (August 4, 1958) p. 15.

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Part Four
POSTWAR COUNTERINSURGENT
VICTORIES

EAST GERMANY (June 1953)

GREECE (1946-1949)

HUNGARY (October-November 1956)

Chapter Sixteen

EAST GERMANY
June 1953

by Wolfgang H. Kraus



EAST GERMANY (1953)

HPO, Jr

Chapter Sixteen

EAST GERMANY (June 1953)

by Wolfgang H. Kraus

To combat the first uprising in its European satellite, the Soviet government used military power and suppressed the East German workers out of hand.

BACKGROUND

The emergence of a separate East German political system, the German Democratic Republic (Deutsche Demokratische Republik, or DDR), after World War II was linked with the breakdown of the initial conception of joint four-power rule for occupied Germany. Coupled as it was with the division of German territory into four separate zones of occupation under the British, French, Americans, and Russians; the creation of a special regime for Berlin; and the de facto entrenchment of Polish rule over important German territories in the East (East Prussia, West Prussia, Eastern Pomerania, Brandenburg's eastern section, and most of Silesia), the breakdown was part of the progressive deterioration of East-West relationships after 1946. The U.S.S.R. more and more openly pursued a policy of separation and Sovietization of the areas under its control, and it was to become increasingly clear that the foundations of this policy had been deliberately laid in the early months of Soviet occupation.

The DDR took shape in the fall of 1949 as a "sovereign state," a political creation sponsored by the U.S.S.R. on the territory of the Soviet Zone (SZ). It was designed both to provide the formal framework for the progressive recasting of the East German social, economic, cultural, and political system in the image of Soviet society and to make it eligible for membership in the Soviet bloc. Upon a society which had only just emerged from fourteen years of Nazi totalitarianism, a system which the victors held up to contempt and from which significant elements of the population had become alienated, a new order was to be imposed. Another totalitarianism was now to be made palatable for those so recently liberated from their old one.

Characteristics Distinguishing East Germany from Other Soviet Bloc Countries

There were certain ingredients in this situation which gave the development of the DDR a somewhat special character among the earlier "People's Democracies" in the Soviet fold. The Soviet military conquest of enemy territory and the continuing Soviet military presence were

crucial factors in the ensuing development of the DDR--elements which it had only partly in common with the other members of the bloc. Industrially, technologically, and culturally the DDR was the most Western-oriented and advanced European area under Soviet control. Furthermore, it was the home of Europe's oldest Socialist labor party movement (the SPD), which could claim Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels as its sponsors. Unlike the other satellites, the DDR was not a national entity but part of a divided nation.

The old capital city of Berlin possessed a separate and special status, determined by inter-allied agreements. The city was subdivided into the holdings (sectors) of the four allied occupiers; the sectors occupied by the British, French, and Americans conformed into West Berlin, while the Soviet Zone remained separate as East Berlin. West Berlin was wholly surrounded by Soviet-occupied territory so that access to the West was both limited and precarious. The entire arrangement, from the point of view of either the German people of the Soviet Zone or of the Western powers, was provisional.

Berlin's special character and status were from the outset to present difficult problems for the Western powers, the U.S.S.R., and the emerging Western-oriented Federal Republic of Germany (Deutsche Bundesrepublik, or FRG), as well as for the DDR. The very existence and the growing vitality of a free West Berlin continued to be a troublesome irritant to the advancement of Soviet policy and, by the same token, an asset and a major responsibility for the West.

The Population of the DDR and East Berlin

The Soviet Zone, roughly the size of Pennsylvania, contained a German population of between 17 and 18 million people, in addition to more than a million in East Berlin. The population structure showed the unmistakable effects of the war and of the postwar breakdown of the Third Reich's social and political order. The ratio of men and women showed a conspicuous imbalance: There were 135 women to 100 men in 1946 and 125 to 100 in 1950 (in Berlin the ratio remained 135 to 100), with only very slight improvement after that date, presumably because of the departure of substantial numbers of single males. The age distribution clearly reflected heavy wartime losses in the working and productive age groups, a development accentuated by the continuing drain of those escaping to the West.

The effect of the flight from the Soviet Zone into the West is impressively summed up by a few figures. It is estimated that between 1945 and 1951, some 930,000 persons made their escape. In 1952 more than 182,000 people fled, and in 1953 the number rose to over 331,000. The avalanche-like quality of this exodus is brought out by an observation made in 1961 that the total number of refugees since 1945 had approximated the population of Norway (3.6 million). Furthermore, these refugees included some of the most productive persons in the country, there was no "export of misery."¹

Even these few statistical data suggest the picture of a society under stress. Without having recovered from the dislocations of the war and immediate postwar periods, it was to undergo rapid political and social change.

The DDR Constitution and Its Violation by the Leadership

The formal establishment of the DDR in 1949 followed that of the Federal Republic of Germany, whose Basic Law had become effective on May 23, 1949. The constitution of the DDR was based upon a constitutional draft of 1946 which had been at the time presented by the Communist-dominated Socialist Unity party (Sozialistische Einheitspartei, or SED). After several bodies of dubious representative quality had approved it, the constitution was finally put into effect in May 1949 by action of the German People's Council (Volkrat), a body which had been elected by the Second German People's Congress in 1948. It is not possible here to examine the details of the adoption procedure; suffice it to say that the manner in which it was managed forecast the rapid ascendancy of the SED to total control of the political system.²

Although the constitution maintained the formal character of a democratic parliamentary regime, its application and manipulation were increasingly to resemble the "people's democracies" of the Soviet bloc.³ Early in October 1949, the German People's Council issued a Manifesto of the National Front of Democratic Germany and adopted, in violation of article 31 of the constitution, a statute by which it constituted itself as the provisional parliament and elected a provisional government with Otto Grotewohl, a member of the SED, as Prime Minister. Acting jointly with the Provisional Chamber of States chosen in the meantime by the already existing diets of the five states composing the DDR, the Council unanimously selected Wilhelm Pieck as President of the DDR.

The DDR Government Is Sovietized

Henceforth, real power was to be wielded by the new government acting in unison with the leadership of the ruling party, the SED. The first government under Grotewohl included three Deputy Prime Ministers: Walter Ulbricht of the SED, Otto Nuschke of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), and Kastner of the Liberal-Democratic party (LDP). The last two and some other members of the Cabinet were selected in recognition of the continuing "alliance" with several non-Communist parties, the most important of which were the CDU and the LDP.

The 1946 representation of the two parties in the state diets had almost equaled and in three cases exceeded that of the SED. By using the device of a compulsory democratic bloc of parties with arbitrarily fixed ratios of seats for each party and appropriate recastings of the government, however, the SED gained a virtual monopoly of power.⁴ In exercising this power, the SED was responsible only to the U.S.S.R. and the Russian Communist leadership.

With its political supremacy assured, the SED accelerated its efforts to Sovietize the DDR. Symptomatic were the establishment of a Ministry of State Security under Wilhelm Zaisser and the proclamation at the July 1950 Third Party Congress of the SPD that it was a party of the "new type"—that is, dedicated to an activist policy of unremitting class struggle.^b

The substance of political power in the DDR would, in the years to come, lie in the hands of a triumvirate^b composed of Walter Ulbricht (Deputy Prime Minister; SED Secretary General; and member of the Politburo, SED Secretariat, and Central Committee), Otto Grotewohl (Prime Minister, member of the Politburo and Central Committee) and Wilhelm Pieck (DDR President and Politburo member). This group proved itself capable of retaining power while exercising it in close conformity with the Kremlin's wishes.

They united in their hands both supreme leadership of the ruling party through the Politburo and direction of the governmental apparatus. Under them, the Cabinet, ministries, legislature, and mass organizations would carry on their appointed tasks through a complex maze of relationships.

The Process of Communisation Is Accelerated

The establishment of an "anti-Fascist-democratic" order had been the professed earlier objective of the SED. Its logical corollary was an alliance with other "anti-Fascist forces" in the form of the "National Front of Democratic Germany and the SED." As a party of the new type dedicated to the principles of Marxism-Leninism, the SED was committed to the accelerated building up of "socialism." Ulbricht made a formal announcement of the transition to a "people's democratic order" on the occasion of the Second Party Conference (a meeting of narrower participation than a Party Congress) of July 9-12, 1952.

Even though the process had been underway for some time, this announcement was the signal for an ever-widening sequence of revolutionary changes penetrating throughout the social fabric of the DDR. This acceleration and the mounting, multipronged pressures engendered by ever-new measures affecting virtually every social group in the system were primarily responsible for bringing on the crisis that was to culminate in the June 1953 uprising.

On July 11, 1952, while the Second Party Conference was still in session, an editorial in East Berlin's Berliner Zeitung offered its readers this reassuring, yet ominous statement: "What is going to happen next in the DDR? This is the question asked by some timid souls. Is there going to be an explosion, a revolutionary overthrow which will turn things upside down? Not at all!"^b The impact of the new measures which, as the writer implied, clearly were beginning to trouble the man in the street, would increasingly affect the political, administrative, economic, cultural, and religious spheres.

Collectivization of Agriculture and Industry Is Pressed

During the Second Party Conference, Ulbricht pointed out that the share of public and co-operative enterprises, as compared to private ones, in industrial production had risen from 73 percent in 1950 to 79 percent in 1951 and would reach 81 percent by the end of 1952.⁹ At the same time he referred to "voluntary" beginnings of farm collectivization and stressed the need for further strengthening of governmental authority. The basis was thus laid for a vigorous attack on the remaining private sector of the economy. If the advance of Sovietization had hitherto been gradual, the class struggle was now to be pressed forward unrelentingly.

Despite assurances that the growth of both agricultural and artisans' cooperatives would continue to proceed by voluntary action, collectivization was vigorously pursued. Various methods of compulsion were used to bring the reluctant to heel. In the case of farmers, the setting of excessive delivery quotas was often used as a means of coercion. Massive propaganda efforts were made through the channels of agricultural production unions. Accusations of tax violations, sabotage, or "Fascist" political activity could be made to serve for farmers, artisans, and independent businessmen.¹⁰ The progressive liquidation of the private retail trade was aided through the granting of preferential treatment to the government-owned trade organization (HO) and to consumers' unions and through other administrative pressures. The network of rules and regulations made it increasingly difficult to avoid violations, and when they occurred businesses were often confiscated outright.

Among the measures used to liquidate private industry—which in mid-1952 produced 23 percent of the total value of goods¹¹—were differential taxation, discrimination in the allotment of raw materials, and expropriation (for instance, in cases of failures to satisfy delivery quotas). In certain instances the charge of economic sabotage was effectively invoked.

Workers Find New Work Norms Onerous

At the same time, the pressures were mounting upon industrial workers to increase their productivity. This turned out to be one of the most important factors in heightening tensions during this critical period. In keeping with earlier U.S.S.R. practice, more and more emphasis was to be placed upon the development of complex system of wages based on achievement in order to maximize the production effort. Underlying this was the growing realization on the part of the SED leadership and its planners that German productivity was not keeping up with its planning requirements. Aggravating the problem were such factors as the heavy drain of resources to the U.S.S.R. in the early postwar years, the critical shortage of iron and steel resulting from the partition of East and West Germany, and the shortage of domestic food resources which followed Polish seizure of eastern agricultural areas. Many of the problems were, nevertheless, attributable to the shortcomings of the leadership itself. Failure to meet the goals set was underlined, for instance, in the first quarter 1953 report of the DDR's Central

Statistical Office, which urged that measures be taken to make up for current deficiencies in filling the plan. All of this led to a growing sense of alarm and frustration on the part of the DDR planners and strengthened their determination to bring about corrective steps on an authoritarian basis.

While in 1951 and 1952 collective contracts had still formally preserved the notion of collective bargaining, by early 1953 directives from the ministries had become decisive. In May 1952, it had been emphasized that "technically based work norms" (TAN, or technische begruendete Arbeitsnorm) should be cooperatively established in shops and industries, but by 1953 their determination became a matter for management alone. According to the ruling doctrine, these norms were to be based not on average but on substantially higher-than-average worker performance. Each time new work norms were invoked, it meant that the worker had to do substantially more work in order to maintain his wage level.¹² In many work situations, this inevitably brought about losses of actual income.

Nor could the workers expect to obtain assistance from their own unions. For some time, the Freier Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (FDGB) had been an instrument of the ruling party and consequently was itself forcefully promoting the cause of productivity and the development of appropriate performance wages. Since the government had also become the master of prices, as well as the regulator and largest supplier of consumer needs, the worker found himself in a progressive squeeze.¹³ A mood of profound and mounting uneasiness and dissatisfaction in the working population was the result, and it did not always stay below the surface. Thus the official party newspaper, Neues Deutschland, reported on April 22, 1953, from Magdeburg that the workers of a certain important plant held "the view they are not so crazy as to raise the norms voluntarily."

Communist Regimentation Reaches Into Cultural and Religious Activities

Similarly, intensified pressures in the cultural and religious spheres contributed to the deepening anxiety and distress among important parts of the population. Although the progressive regimentation of the arts was important, it would be difficult to contend that it was directly relevant to the development of the June crisis. The vigor with which schools and universities were "coordinated" into the system was, however, bound to have wide repercussions. Teachers were required to treat Marxism-Leninism as the sole scientific basis of their fields. In general, the controls over teachers and students were expanded and tightened. In the universities, courses in Marxism-Leninism had already become required subjects for the academic year 1951-52, and the intellectual and organizational pressures upon professors and students proceeded apace. No longer was it enough to acknowledge a Stalinist version of Leninism as the foundation of teaching and research; Soviet scholarship itself had to be granted its due place.

The number of true believers in the faculties was steadily increased to assure the desired result and, by the same token, the autonomy of both universities and student bodies had to give way to the imposition of firm controls.¹⁴ In the spring of 1952, children of middle-class parents encountered growing difficulties in gaining admission to high schools, and students who were active in the Protestant Young Community (Junge Gemeinde) were ousted from classes.

The struggle to gain control over the churches had gained momentum after 1950. The Third Party Congress in July 1950 had accused leaders of the Protestant church of reactionary interference with the "democratic order of the DDR" and called for a protest movement within the church. Increasingly, restrictions were placed upon religious instruction, religious publications, and the ministry itself.¹⁵ At the height of the growing conflict at the end of 1952, the state's annual financial contribution to the churches (in itself part of the traditional German pattern) was substantially reduced, while an old Protestant foundation in Halle was expropriated. In 1952 and early 1953, attacks centered upon the membership of the Young Community. Many of its members were high-school and university students, whose participation in these new and active religious groups was rightly regarded by the SED as an effective obstacle to full control over the moral and intellectual life of the new generation. It was hardly surprising that the Protestant church became such an important target, since Protestantism was and is the religion of more than 80 percent of the DDR population and the Protestant church continued to represent virtually the only institutional link between Germans living in East and West Germany. That these attacks were resisted and proved generally unsuccessful hardly lessened the bitterness of people who became their victims.

Attempts To Militarize German Youth Meet With Resistance

The SED's natural interest in securing the allegiance of the new generation had led it from the outset to devote much attention to the development of a comprehensive youth organization along the lines of the Soviet model. The Free German Youth (Freie Deutsche Jugend, or FDJ) was expected not only to serve in the ideological preparation of the young but also to provide a cadre reserve for the increasingly important police and paramilitary forces as well as for other government positions. To reinforce the effectiveness of SED guidance, obviously in the face of some reasonable doubt, 6,000 SED functionaries had been assigned to the task of tightening up the FDJ in October 1951.

As part of the general change of pace in the regime's policy, the Fourth Free German Youth Parliament in July 1952 advocated the militarization of youth. A short-lived organization, Service for Germany, was created on this occasion. In early May 1953, a new FDJ charter emphasized the duty of the young to contribute to their country's defense. At least after October 1952, however, there was mounting evidence of growing passive resistance among the young and the number of new members dropped substantially. As august a body as the SED Central Committee

gravely considered the matter and sensibly recommended against resort to an outright promotional recruiting campaign. FDJ members were conspicuously reluctant to pay even the very low membership fees, and, above all, they evinced a growing tendency to go West.¹⁶ Observers noted some of the more significant causes underlying these marks of disaffection: resentment over increased demands made upon the members, undue curtailment of their free time, and heightened pressures to join the uniformed services.

Throughout this period, it was evident that the manifest determination of the SED leadership to lay the foundation for a military force was encountering a far from enthusiastic response on the part of the people expected to serve.

Communist Efforts To Create East German Armed Forces and Paramilitary Organizations

The call for the establishment of armed forces contained in the Final Resolution of the Second Party Conference, in order to mount "a struggle of national liberation against the American, British and French occupying forces..." and "to secure the peace, democratic progress and the building of socialism... against Western aggressive acts," appeared to require no more than a formal conversion of quasi-military police units already in being. Following earlier measures of the Soviet military government, the DDR had built up, in addition to the regular People's Police, a number of highly centralized and fully equipped forces which were given various labels designed to identify them with the police. These units, which in 1952 became known as the Garrisoned People's Police (Kasernierte Volkspolizei, or KVP), were recruited largely among German prisoners of war in the U.S.S.R. and were directed by carefully selected, politically reliable ex-officers or old Communists. These units were designed to form the nucleus of the DDR army (unveiled only in January 1956) and were to be enlarged from about 65,000 in 1951 to 110,000 by the end of 1952. This buildup, with the requisite intensification of the recruiting drive, involved large, concealed expenditures and inevitably added to the heavy strains upon the system.¹⁷

Certain subsidiary paramilitary organizations made their appearance in 1952. The Society for Sports and Technology sought a large popular enlistment for the purpose of providing pre-military training. Until July 1952, this had been one of the tasks assigned to the FDJ, but it had failed to perform the work effectively. The variously called Fighting Groups were to provide military training for SED factory workers, originally only in large government-owned (Volkseigene Betriebe, or VEB) factories. Their duties were to be carried out under the auspices of the SED organization, which in later years was to expand the system considerably.

Further Communist Efforts To Centralize Power in East Germany

The same determination on the part of the SED leadership to concentrate power, so as to increase its leverage throughout the system, and to consolidate its control over all crucial spheres and groups may be seen to underlie several important legislative measures passed during this critical period. Perhaps the most notable was the abolition of the five states of the DDR by a statute issued by the Cabinet within a week after the Second Party Conference. On July 23, 1952, the statute "On the further Democratization of the Organization and Procedure of Government Agencies in the States of the DDR" directed the states to reorganize their areas and to transfer their functions to new district agencies.¹⁸ On July 25, the several state parliaments, whose authority was already eroded, passed identical statutes terminating their own existence. The defunct states were superseded by 14 districts subdivided into 215 counties.

That this step involved violations of DDR constitutional provisions was, in view of previous practices, not in itself remarkable. The breakup of the larger state entities, each of which had a certain traditional cohesion that the SED leadership feared might retain the attachment or even affection of local groups and individuals, constituted another calculated step in the demolition of an older order (already begun by the predecessor Nazi regime). The practical result was complete centralization of the DDR regime.

East Germans React to Communist Pressures by Fleeing to West

Enough has been said to indicate the ruthlessness of the measures by which a complex modern society and its people were subjected to totalitarian controls. Moreover, enough of the human reaction was becoming visible to suggest that the Communist leadership might not succeed in resolving a crucial dilemma: They were damaging and alienating some of the very social groups whose willing cooperation was, certainly in the short run, indispensable for the success of their undertaking. The most conspicuous and dramatic evidence of this alienation was the accelerating mass flight from the DDR into the West.

The first and strongest impression the recorded refugee figures convey is the sharply rising curve which, after a temporary drop from nearly 198,000 in 1950 to 165,000 in 1951, rose from 182,000 in 1952 to 331,000 in 1953.¹⁹ A breakdown for the crisis months from the end of 1952 to June 1953 illustrates the pattern:

November 1952	17,000
December 1952	17,000
January 1953	22,400
February 1953	31,600
March 1953	58,600
April 1953	36,700
May 1953	35,500
June 1953	40,400

Who Were the Refugees?

It is hardly surprising that the social composition of this migration showed variations and that changes in the pattern may be seen to reflect shifts in DDR policy. One careful study of the refugees entering West Berlin during January and February 1953²⁰ sheds some light on their social composition. Workers with their dependents constituted almost 52 percent of the refugees; government employees and clerks, 23 percent; farmers, 14 percent; businessmen, 3 percent; artisans and others, over 3 percent; and the unemployed, 5 percent.

The large proportion of workers is readily understandable in terms of the preceding discussion. The share of farmers had substantially increased by comparison with 1952. Only a small number of professionals and intellectuals (under "others"), members of both the old and new intelligentsia, appeared in this group, since many of them had left earlier. Their number was overshadowed by a conspicuous percentage of government and private employees. The study also showed that only 10 percent of the total were young adults, which represented a decline from 1952.

More general data indicate, however, that over 52 percent of the refugees in 1952 and almost 49 percent in 1953 were under 25 years. During the months January through March 1953, 3,360, 4,472, and 8,816 Free German Youth members respectively left the DDR. Also largely overlapping with this age group, one may assume, was the substantial number of men in the People's Police who deserted. Altogether, 6,000 departed between 1949 and the end of 1952. Of these, 2,250 left in 1952 alone. This included the remarkable number of 1,440 of the Garrisoned People's Police, the highly select military formation.

Reasons Why the East Germans Fled

The motivations underlying flight were complex and hard to determine precisely. Farmers who had failed to deliver their quota often found themselves faced with the alternatives of jail or flight. Similarly, businessmen were confronted with hard choices, especially in difficult tax situations. Others left because they hoped for better economic opportunities. Workers sought to escape restrictions and pressures, inadequate living conditions, and injustices. One Berlin study reported by Willy Brandt, subsequently mayor of West Berlin, concluded that in the spring of 1952, five percent of the adults left for political reasons but that by fall this percentage had dropped to two percent. For most, the reasons were economic: 20-30 percent of the adults and 30-32 percent of the young adults professed to have left because they disliked the occupations into which they had been impressed, and 30-35 percent of the adults hoped for economic betterment. While such figures should not be taken at face value, they indicate something of the range of attitudes and motives. Those who fled to the West on purely political, moral, or religious grounds constituted a minority. It may be argued that in a situation in which for many the most basic needs were at stake, political motivations in the strict sense were superseded by more basic considerations.

The question has been raised as to whether a migration of this size was not in some measure a deliberate policy of the DDR and hence did not justify the conclusion that the refugees "voted with their feet." There are some indications that this may have been true in the cases of those individuals whose continued presence might have been regarded by the government as socially wasteful or inconvenient. The departure of large numbers of persons in the most productive age groups, however, constituted a serious social and economic loss for the DDR during a period of pressure and strain and presented massive evidence of growing discontent and disaffection.

INSURGENCY

Beneath the DDR's complex system of nearly total control, tensions were rising to a high level during the latter part of 1952 and the early months of 1953. In a sense, the mass flight served as a safety valve for the system since it doubtless removed, along with many other persons, some of the most dynamic and potentially dangerous people. What remained was enough of a powderkeg to make prudence seem advisable.

Signs of Disaffection Become Clear But Work Norms Are Increased

There had been various indications of growing restlessness. In October 1952, in Klein-Machnow, hard on the zonal boundary, 2,000 persons demonstrated to protest petty difficulties connected with border crossings. This incident was "resolved" by some 20 arrests. The editor of Neues Deutschland, Rudolf Herrnstadt, informed the 10th plenary meeting of the Central Committee in November 1952 that in Zwickau, Fuerstenberg, Hettstedt, and the Stalinallee in Berlin, "the workers push the functionaries and not the other way around." Another functionary, speaking of strike activities in some large factories, attributed them to questions of wages and salaries.²³ Work stoppages and attacks on the SED at open meetings, though they were not always reported, occurred in April and May 1953 in such places as Jena (Zeiss), Halle (Zeitz Works), Eisleben, and East Berlin.²⁴ The SED leadership could hardly remain unaware or unconcerned.

It took another incident, which occurred under somewhat special circumstances, to set off the spark that ignited the powderkeg. It will be recalled that the DDR planners, taking Soviet practice as their model, had long endeavored to advance the use of work norms (TAN) as part of an achievement wage system designed to overcome the problem of lagging productivity. In the middle of May, a plenary session of the SED's Central Committee adopted a resolution asking the government to raise work norms by at least ten percent. On May 28, the Cabinet issued an order stipulating "for the time being" a ten percent increase in the work norms, with the new pay scale to go into effect on June 1. Since it was this issue that had already led to a great

deal of unrest and bitterness in the preceding months, as reflected in newspaper stories,²⁵ it was predictable that the new order would not be calmly received, especially in view of the strictly administrative manner in which it was handled. In one instance SED functionaries who learned of the growing unrest and threats of work stoppage in Berlin stopped in and managed to calm the men.

German Expectations Are Raised by Government's Announcement of a More Moderate Policy

A little over a week later, on June 11, out of a clear sky, Neues Deutschland came out with a dramatic statement that the East German Politburo on June 9 had adopted the policy of the New Course. It thereby appeared to adopt a position similar to roughly contemporary policy shifts occurring in the Soviet Union and some other satellites. This looked like an abrupt withdrawal from the harsh line pursued since the Second Party Conference. The proclaimed objective of the New Course was to support a "decisive improvement of living standards for all parts of the population and to assure the strengthening of the guarantees of law and order in the DDR." The declaration intimated at the same time that "the SED and the Government of the DDR had made a number of mistakes in the past, and these had led to the adoption of certain rules and measures..." that "impaired the interests of such groups as the independent farmer, the retailer, the artisan and the intelligentsia." One of the consequences had been "that numerous persons have left the Republic." It was recommended that, "in connection with changes in the plan for heavy industry, measures be adopted to remedy these mistakes and to improve the living standards of workers, farmers, the intelligentsia, artisans and other middle class groups." In view of the adoption of the norms increase only a few days earlier, this constituted an astonishing volte-face.

On June 12, the press reported that on the previous day the Council of Ministers had passed certain measures to carry out the Politburo's recommendations. Among these were the re-orientation of ration cards to some two million, mostly middle-class people who had been deprived of them on April 9. A recent price increase affecting food sold in government stores was cancelled. Compulsory measures to retrieve back taxes from small businessmen and traders were withdrawn. Confiscated trade and industrial enterprises were to be returned upon application and the owners could be granted short-term credits. Certain farms were to be restored to their owners. Refugees who wanted to return to the DDR were offered restoration of their property. Farmers who had left their farms because of special difficulties were promised full restoration. Arrests, current trials and criminal sentences were to be carefully reviewed. Special approval was expressed for a conciliatory agreement which had just been concluded with the church. Important reductions were granted in railroad fares, including workers' tickets (the price of which had recently been sharply raised), and certain hardships in the field of social security were to be remedied.

Refusal of East German Communist Leaders To Change Work Norms Stirs Anger

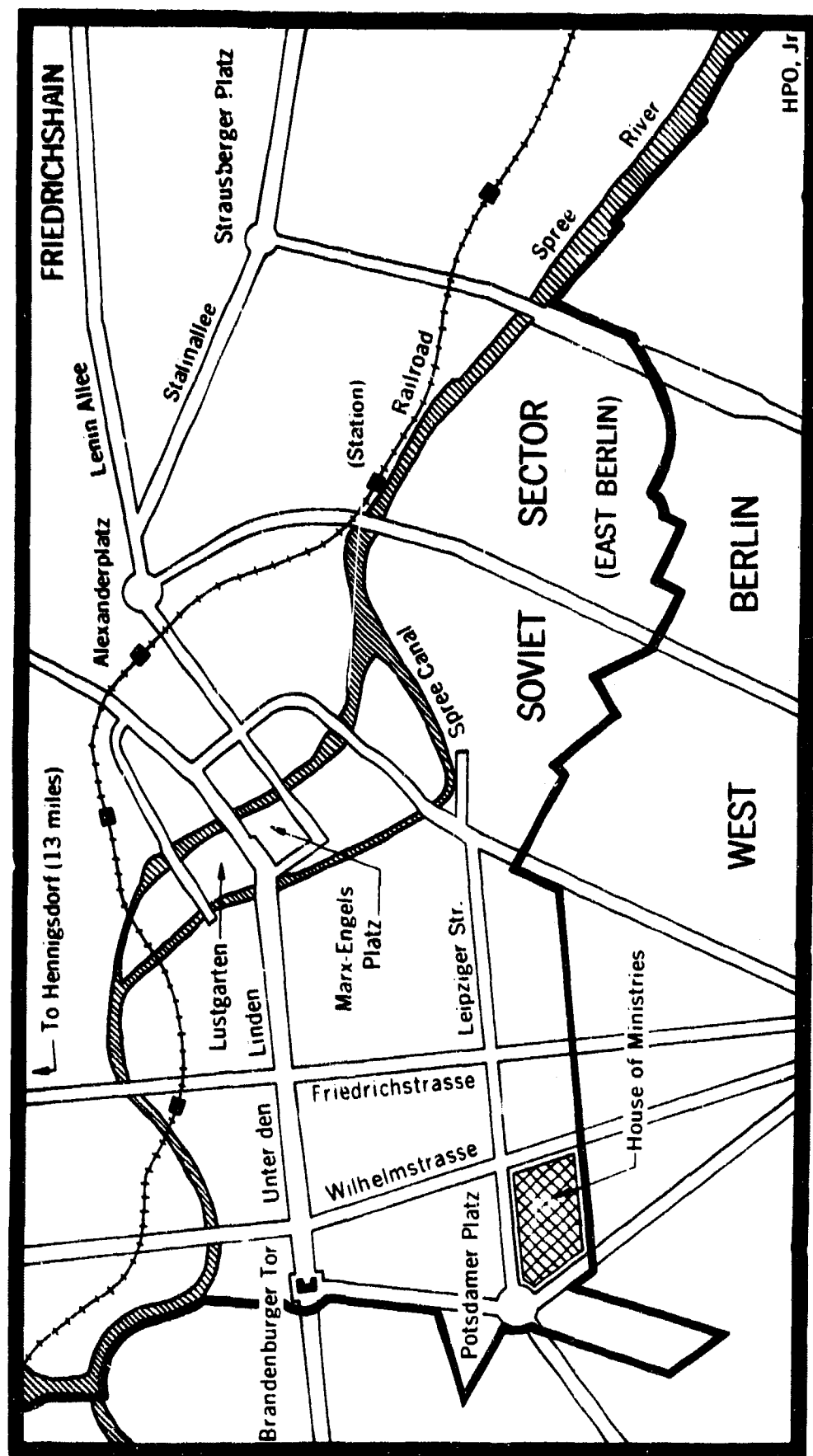
What had happened? At the time, nobody outside the most intimate inner circle of the SED leadership could have answered the question. Since the death of Stalin on March 5 and the succession of Georgi M. Malenkov, Soviet policy had been undergoing significant shifts the direction of which was as yet far from clear. Changes had also occurred among Soviet representatives in the DDR. One June 5, the new Soviet High Commissioner, Vladimir Semyonov, Georgi Pushkin's successor, arrived in Berlin. On June 6, he saw the SED leaders. Probably on this occasion, he presented Ulbricht with a memorandum from Moscow on the New Course policy for adoption by the SED Politburo.

Apparently Ulbricht had resisted two earlier Moscow requests for a change of policy. Despite this new and direct pressure, Ulbricht delayed publication of the change in policy until June 11; and even then, it was issued without any explanation. Concerning the work norms, however, Ulbricht remained adamant in the face of heavy pressure from Semyonov. Thus, there was no mention by the DDR Council of Ministers of dropping the 10 percent work norms increase, even though the Politburo's initial statement had seemed to imply an alleviation in this direction.²⁷

On June 15, some construction workers at the Friedrichshain building site in the north-east section of East Berlin quit work in anger over the work norms situation. Whether they had learned of this action or not, the building workers of Block 40 of the Stalinallee also stopped work and decided to draw up a resolution on grievances, especially on the work norms question, which they proposed to present to the government. They were clearly encouraged by a June 14 article in Neues Deutschland, which had strongly criticized "dictatorial and administrative" enforcement of the new work norms. The article argued that the change of norms should not become effective until the workers themselves had been convinced of its necessity. It is unlikely, however, that the foregoing developments by themselves would have produced the outbreak of the 16th.

An Article Supporting the Norms Increase Incites Workers To March on the Government

What ignited the fuse was an article by Otto Lehmann, a zealous functionary of the FDGB, published in its official organ, the Tribüne, on the morning of the 16th. This was read by one of the men of Block 40 and was soon going from hand to hand. After Lehmann stated that the work norms increase of "at least 10 percent" was to become effective on June 30 (retroactive to June 1), he took the bull by the horns to answer "the question raised in a few cases" of whether the work norms decision was still correct and should be upheld in light of the New Course policy. The answer, declared the brave functionary, was that the decision on the work norms increase was still completely correct.²⁸



AREAS OF EAST BERLIN AFFECTED BY JUNE 16-17 UPRISING

This statement intensified the anger and indignation of the men who had already found the change reflected in their reduced pay envelopes on June 6 and had determined to do something. That it was a union official who wrote the article may well have given a special edge to their reaction. Lehmann made a point of expressing his approval of the New Course policy; but at the same time, he preached the necessity of boosting production and thus seemed to offer the proposition that the New Course concessions were designed to benefit all other social groups at the expense of labor.

Thus an article that was intended to settle matters succeeded only in focusing attention on the arbitrariness and injustice of the regime. As if this were not enough, another union official appeared shortly after 8 a.m. and emphatically confirmed the validity of the Tribüne article's argument. He was probably not a little proud of his slogan—"First work more, then eat more!"

Shortly thereafter, some 80 workers began to march, carrying a sign stating, "We demand reduction of the norms." On finding trade union headquarters, their initial goal, locked, they moved toward the DDR government center, the House of Ministries. Hundreds of their fellow workers from adjacent sites joined them, as the march went from Stalinallee to Alexanderplatz, Unter den Linden, and to the House of Ministries at the corner of Leipziger- and Wilhelmstrasse. By this time, the marchers numbered about 10,000.

Having reached their destination, the marchers demanded access for two delegates selected from Block 40. This was denied. The crowd called for Grotewohl and Ulbricht. The delegates apparently were told by the building guard that Grotewohl was not in his office. The demonstrators did not believe it, but both Grotewohl and Ulbricht were indeed in another building attending the regular Tuesday meeting of the Politburo. Fritz Selbmann, Minister of Mines, appeared and made an unsuccessful effort to save the situation; he was contemptuously treated and barely heeded.

The Workers Voice Their Demands

In the absence of any leadership, three unidentified workers then proceeded to speak in behalf of the demonstrators. The first one, a building worker, claimed that he had suffered five years in a concentration camp and declared that he was willing to endure another ten for freedom. The demands he formulated were that the work norms be lowered, prices cut, and speakers granted immunity.

The second speaker's recorded words reflected a significant change of mood:

Fellow-workers, this is no more a matter of norms and prices. More is at stake. We come not just from Stalinallee but from all Berlin.

Turning to Selbmann, he went on:

This is the people rising up. We want to be free. The Government must take the consequences for its errors. We want free elections!

After a brief interval, a young man came to the fore and presented an ultimatum for Grotewohl and Ulbricht:

If they do not make their appearance here to receive our demands, we shall march through the Berlin workers' quarters and call a general strike for tomorrow.

Tremendous applause for the speakers showed that they were in tune with the crowd and had correctly gauged its activist mood and drive. Neither Ulbricht nor Grotewohl appeared on the scene.²⁹ Shortly thereafter, another speaker called for a general strike to start the next day, June 17. The return march got underway, in the direction of Stalinallee, with the participants chorusing their demand for a general strike.

Workers React Negatively to the Government's Concession Offer

Meanwhile, a member of the Berlin SED party leadership, Fritz Brandt, had penetrated into the Politburo meeting, impressed Grotewohl with the seriousness of the situation, and strongly urged that something be done promptly about the work norms problem. After further delay, the Politburo adopted a cautiously worded resolution, repudiating the compulsory imposition of the norms increase and offering to review the situation with union representatives. Sound trucks were dispatched to inform the marchers of this new development.

The demonstrators were no longer in a mood to listen. One of the trucks was seized and used by the marchers to disseminate strike slogans more effectively. Word was passed that demonstrators were to assemble at 7 a.m. at Strausberger Platz, from which another march of protest would be started. Activities on June 16th ended at approximately 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

News of the Strike and Workers' Demands Are Spread by RIAS Broadcasts

Sometime that afternoon, a strikers' delegation had made its way into the West Berlin sector and to the official U. S. radio station, RIAS (Radio in the American Sector), which had started sending out news about the strike at 4:30 that afternoon. When the delegation was informed that it was against policy to permit its members to go on the air, they took the opportunity to formulate their demands. At 6:30 p.m., the presence of the delegation was first mentioned by RIAS. At 8 p.m., RIAS reported that the delegation had presented a resolution calling for a strike on the 17th unless the following demands were met by the DDR government: (1) wage payments for the current pay period based on the old norms, (2) immediate lowering of the cost of living, (3) free and secret elections, and (4) no punitive measures against strikers and their spokesmen.

From that point on RIAS dropped all of its regular programs to offer news broadcasts of from five minutes' to one hour's duration. Although many listeners also learned about events from the North West German Radio broadcasts, most observers agree that RIAS was the principal agency spreading the news throughout the DDR. Thus people in more distant and isolated towns and villages who had been totally unaware of the day's crisis learned of the events and became potential participants. There are graphic descriptions from a number of cities and large industrial works of how the news came, the dramatic response, and the spontaneous sense of solidarity experienced by large masses of people carried away by the challenge of the moment.³⁰ The RIAS broadcasts went on all the night of June 16 and throughout the next day until 2 p.m.

Throughout the evening and night of June 16, the mood in East Berlin was one of feverish tension and excitement. Everywhere groups of people discussed the events, and telephone calls spread the news. When word of the strike reached a number of night shifts reporting for work, work was stopped, and some special shop meetings were called. Despite the lack of leadership, the idea of a protest movement and news of the strike and demonstration spread far and wide.

Marchers Stream Into City While Government Forces Position Themselves

In the early morning hours of June 17, action got underway in Berlin. Long before 7 a.m., thousands began to assemble on Strausberger Platz in the middle of Stalinallee. At the same time, tens of thousands of marchers from outlying industrial areas, some from a considerable distance (for instance, 12,000 men from Hennigsdorf, 27 kilometers from the city center), moved in great columns into the city, converging on the government area. A wave of strikes paralyzed most of East Berlin's industry and spread to surrounding areas, the total number of affected places being estimated at over 300.³¹ The first marching column got underway from Strausberger Platz at about 8 a.m. and several more followed.

As the marchers approached their destination, they encountered growing opposition from People's Police units. Clashes developed, for example, at such places as Potsdamer Platz, the House of Ministries, the Brandenburger Tor, and the Lustgarten. Meanwhile, Soviet military units were alerted and prepared to move on Berlin. Before 9 a.m., some Soviet tanks and armored cars were seen on Alexanderplatz and their numbers increased steadily throughout the morning. After 10 a.m., the entire public transportation system came to a standstill. In growing numbers, detachments of the Garrisoned People's Police and Soviet units, from tank forces to infantry, began to occupy strategic places, especially in efforts to cordon off the government section and other important centers.

The Marchers Become Increasingly Violent and Suffer Their First Casualties

To express their political goals and sentiments, the demonstrators shouted such slogans as:

"We want free elections!"
"Away with Ulbricht and Grotewohl!"
"Ivan go home! We want a united Germany!"

The frequent singing of the third verse of the old German anthem was an expression of the same goals—"Unity and right and freedom for the German fatherland." More and more, political complaints superseded economic grievances.

As the situation became more tense, the crowds, which had on the whole shown remarkable self-imposed discipline, increasingly engaged in direct action. Their targets were often symbolic of the system of oppression they hoped to overthrow. SED party offices and government retail and HO stores were demolished. At about 11 a.m., the red flag was pulled down from the Brandenburger Tor and replaced first by a Berlin flag and later by German flags. Thousands attacked the building of the State Security Service (SSD) in Friedrichstrasse, seized the first three floors, and destroyed files and equipment until they were repelled by SSD machinegun fire. Elsewhere in the DDR, jails were attacked and prisoners set free.

By 11 a.m., all accessible windows of the House of Ministries had been smashed and a side entrance demolished. A hammer and sickle flag was pulled out through the broken windows and burned; the flames spread into the building and began to destroy files and equipment on the ground floor. Because the German police had avoided use of firearms, they had been unable to stem the tide. The seizure of the building was finally averted around noon when Soviet tanks came to their support. Only then did the German police, presumably the Garrisoned People's Police, begin to use their firearms, probably under Soviet military orders.³²

At noon Soviet tanks rolled into a crowd estimated at 50,000 at the Lustgarten (Marx-Engels Platz), where the first victim was claimed. Here and on Potsdamer Platz Soviet action elicited counteraction by demonstrators who attacked tanks, trying to disable them by breaking off antennas, pushing metal rods into chain drives, and any other means. At 1 p.m., the Soviet city commandant, a General Dibrova, proclaimed martial law for East Berlin, effective immediately, and outlawed all demonstrations and meetings of more than three persons in streets and public buildings. Similar orders were issued in many towns throughout the DDR.

The demonstrators, many of whom may have learned only belatedly about the imposition of martial law, continued their activities in various parts of the city. Since the Soviet forces did not hesitate to open fire, as on Potsdamer Platz, Alexanderplatz, and elsewhere, hundreds of persons were wounded and a number of deaths occurred. Soviet military action, backed by German police detachments, did not succeed in squashing the uprising and enforcing an uneasy peace until that evening. Similar repressive action brought about the end of the open revolt throughout the DDR, even though overt protest actions continued to flare up during the coming days and weeks.

Estimates of Insurgent Strength and Casualties

The extent of the uprising can be seen from the fact that some 270,000 workers from 110 industrial enterprises in the Magdeburg, Leipzig, and Halle areas alone went on strike. Demonstrations were recorded for 7 district capitals, 43 county capitals, and 105 other towns and villages, while an actual "uprising of the population"³³ affected 6 district capitals, 22 county capitals, and 44 other towns and villages, a total of 72 places. Grotewohl, who hardly wished to exaggerate, reported to the SED Central Committee that a total of 300,000 workers had been on strike and disorders had occurred in 272 cities and towns.³⁴

The suppression of the insurrection on June 17 took a severe toll. According to official West German figures, a total of 267 participants ("workers," according to source) were killed and 1,067 wounded during the demonstrations. It is believed that there were 92 executions under martial law and later another 14 death sentences and executions. It has also been estimated that more than 5,000 arrests were made subsequently and that 1,100 to 1,200 alleged insurgents were sentenced to forced labor, prisons, or concentration camps.³⁵ Other Western sources, however, give substantially lower estimates.

Some Conclusions Concerning the Causes and Character of the Uprising

Certain general conclusions may be drawn from the foregoing account. The long-range cause of the uprising can be seen in the mounting pressures generated by the accelerated pace of Sovietization begun in 1952. In a wider sense, these pressures stemmed from the seizure of power by a small Communist minority after 1945, acting under the protection of the Soviet occupation and soon abandoning all pretense about their "democratic" goals. After 1952 the pressures brought about increasingly strong reactions throughout the community. Widespread deprivations lowered the already modest living standard of the majority of people. A mounting sense of insecurity and injustice prevailed among social groups faced with collectivization. The ruthless drive for greater productivity began to alienate the workers and farmers, while many of the youth resisted social mobilization because of the demands it made upon them.

Unquestionably, the immediate cause for the outbreak was the mismanaged decision about work norms, especially after that decision became absurd in the face of the New Course announcement.

In considering the character of the insurrection, it is clear that it was in the nature of a political protest. The initial economic aim was soon submerged, as we have seen, in the people's political aspirations. The primary demands were the ousting of the entrenched government, identified with Ulbricht, Grotewohl, and Pieck; the holding of free elections; and, thus, reunification with Western Germany.

The insurrection did not last long enough for the participants to attain control over any area, unless it is contended that for some hours on Wednesday, June 17, 1953, they "controlled" parts

of East Berlin and some other urban centers, a control that was to be shattered by Soviet military intervention.

The Critical Lack of Organization and Leadership

Crucial characteristics of the uprising were its spontaneity and the resultant lack of organization and leadership. All reasonable observers agree that there was no indication of preparation, manipulation, or management by internal or external organizations, despite subsequent Soviet and DDR propaganda attempting by such allegations to offset the regime's own failures. A small group of aroused and determined construction workers, indignant over their rulers' exploitative misuse of them, used their initiative to start the demonstrations, and they were soon joined by their fellow workers. It is significant that this group of workers was relatively well off; it was used to the best tools and facilities, since it was working on a showplace of the regime, the Stalinallee. These men had acquired a sense of their own worth and were perhaps less inclined than others to accept without resistance a substantial reduction in their lot. The initial activities had a snowball effect, so that not only workers but also other social groups in East Berlin and the DDR were drawn into the movement at breathtaking speed.

As there was no organization at the outset, no effective organization came into being during the brief time the uprising lasted. There was time only for the most provisional, small-scale, and local kind of leadership to emerge. Strike committees usually came into being by acclamation. In a very few instances, individual strike committees succeeded in setting up local central committees. In Goerlitz, a small town in the southeast of the DDR, the strikers ousted the town council in the presence of the townfolk and prepared to replace it. In some villages, mayors were removed and revolutionary councils appointed in their place.³⁶ Under the circumstances, no major leader could rise and no coordinated action was possible except on a small and localized scale, and thus the type and extent of insurgent actions differed greatly from place to place. Nevertheless, actions were often replicated, notably efforts to open jails. Such attempts, some successful and some unsuccessful, occurred in 24 communities, testifying to the common conviction that the regime had perpetrated widespread injustices.³⁷ In communities where central strike committees were constituted, as in Halle and Merseburg, discipline and orderly action was possible; in some other instances, disorientation and ineffectiveness were apparent.

The Riemschneider Report on Leaders and Participants

Who were the local leaders? While we have a considerable number of specific reports about events in various places in addition to East Berlin, only one attempt, that of Ernst Riemschneider, appears to have been made to appraise the composition of the group of strike committeemen and delegates. In a study of 1,200 participants,³⁸ he reached the conclusion that within the leadership group 61 percent were workers, 26 percent clerical employees, 6 percent

academic or professional people, and 6 percent self-employed persons (probably including a substantial number of farmers). Two-thirds were over 30 years old, and 17 percent were members of the SED. The number of workers among the leaders confirmed what was already known about the origin of the insurrection, while the substantial number of SED members in exposed positions was highly significant. The participation of farmers had possibly been underestimated³⁹ because of the relative isolation of villages and small towns. In a general way, this leadership group seems to be representative of the whole body of participants.

The Riemschneider study reported that of its total sample of participants 52 percent were workers, 20 percent clerical employees, and 5 percent in police and military services, while the self-employed (here, the farmers) and academic-professional categories were each given as 6 percent. The occupations of 8.5 percent of the participants were unknown. Some ten percent were women, of whom a quarter had been active in villages and a large number had held SED or other mass organization membership. Half of the participants were under 20 years old; of this young group over 80 percent belonged to the SED or other mass organizations, including 27 percent to the FDJ alone and 10 percent to the police forces (VP or KVP). Of those arrested on or after June 17, 64 percent belonged to this young group. Four individuals in the study sample lost their lives during the demonstrations, and 20 percent of those arrested were sentenced to jail terms.

Despite the inadequacy of the data, what appear significant here again are the impressive role of the young, including members of the FDJ; the substantial participation of women; and, not too surprisingly in light of earlier remarks, the sizable number of police and military personnel who took part in the demonstrations. An equally significant factor which was confirmed by other observers was the slight role of the urban middle class and of the intellectuals. Not only had their numbers been diminished by flight to the West, but they were at the mercy of the regime for their economic existence. Anxiety, resignation, and efforts at accommodation were the natural consequence for many. Only to a limited extent could they regard the June crisis as their own concern in economic terms. What a perceptive writer had stated in 1952 might be said to apply to the June 1953 situation: "The worker is ready to act, the middle class is not, but expects help from outside."⁴⁰

Regional Support for the June Uprising

It must be borne in mind that the actual participants in strikes and demonstrations who were themselves an activist minority in the population, were supported by the sympathetic and even enthusiastic acclaim of a broad but indeterminate part of the community. This is brought out in all accounts by witnesses. The speed and geographic scope of the spread of the insurrection sheds some light, at least by implication, on the extent of popular support for the insurgents. Besides focal points in East Berlin and its industrial satellite towns, the major areas affected

were the central industrial area, including Halle and Leipzig, and the area around Magdeburg to the west; and, somewhat less so, the Brandenburg area around Berlin and the southwestern and southeastern areas around Jena, Gera, and Goerlitz. The mainly rural areas of the north were evidently less involved. The Riemschneider study, whose 1,200 subjects had been active in 274 communities, brings out the significance of small and medium-sized places by noting that 27 percent of the towns in which members of this group had been active had a population of less than 2,500.⁴¹

That the areas of strong participation included the old centers of the labor movement (notably the Magdeburg, Leipzig, and Halle areas), both those primarily SPD and those Communist in the past, must have been especially disillusioning for the SED regime. Grotewohl himself was to acknowledge this in a reference to "illegal SPD organizations" in Magdeburg and Leipzig in his report to the 15th session of the Central Committee.⁴² It is equally important to point out that certain highly industrialized areas remained virtually unaffected by the uprising. This applied, apparently, both to the uranium and coal mines in the Saxonian industrial region and to the largest single steel combine, "J. V. Stalin," in Stalinstadt near Frankfurt-am-Oder. While there is reason to assume that the uranium miners were isolated by poor radio reception, both they and the coal miners were subject to immediate military control by Soviet forces. Stalinstadt was an instance of a new and uniquely privileged model community with a new working population having no tradition of labor solidarity.

The Role of RIAS and the Essentially Spontaneous and Local Nature of the Uprising

Although the insurgents received no real assistance from the outside, it is clear that the continuous newcasts, primarily those by RIAS, played a highly significant role by informing people throughout the DDR of the East Berlin events.⁴³ Even though these broadcasts were confined to news, they provided a stimulant and a measure of coordination to an uprising that had no modern facilities of mass communication at its disposal. On the other hand, the voices of West German leaders in Bonn, such as that of Jacob Kaiser (Minister of All-German Affairs) sought to counsel restraint and moderation. A RIAS broadcast cited official West German advice on June 17 urging demonstrators "to commit no acts that might serve as an excuse for the occupying power to intervene."⁴⁴

Clearly, the most important aspect of the uprising was that it was an essentially spontaneous and unplanned attack upon the center of a totalitarian regime, set off by the economic grievances of a major social group, the industrial workers. A remarkable sense of solidarity, deriving from national grievances against the regime, only partly compensated for its lack of leadership and organization. Largely because of this lack of informed leadership, the tremendous initial advantage of a surprise attack upon an internally shaky totalitarian regime could not be exploited.

The uprising had an essentially nonmilitary character, even though it involved aggressive action and a limited amount of violence.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

The East German workers' uprising was not only put down by military force, but by Soviet military intervention in behalf of the East German regime rather than by a successful self-defense by the DDR government itself.

The most striking aspect of the initial hours of June 16 was the failure of the principal leaders of the regime to respond in a visible and intelligent way to a major crisis. There were a number of reasons for this. The leaders were evidently taken totally by surprise. Even though they had become aware of the growth of tensions and the escalation of "incidents," the possibility of a real break in the dam must have appeared quite remote. Also, many in the upper and middle levels of SED officialdom were confused by the rapid policy shifts. This undoubtedly affected their first response to the uprising and even induced in some of them a certain ambivalence.⁴⁵ Furthermore, the totalitarian regime-in-the-making was clearly handicapped by bureaucratic rigidity, which made it difficult to adjust quickly to an unexpected and unprecedented situation.

The Failure To React Promptly and in Person

The fact that Grotewohl and Ulbricht were reached on June 16 only after considerable delay has already been noted. The building guard at the House of Ministries was first told by Grotewohl's office to get another minister to talk to the marchers. It appears that Grotewohl's office did not grasp the seriousness of the situation; its location in an inner yard of the building kept it in splendid isolation from outside events. The delegates insisted upon seeing Grotewohl and what they considered an offhand treatment enhanced their growing outrage.

A call was made to the Politburo only after a member of Grotewohl's staff, in response to a more urgent call from the guard, had reconnoitered. The sessions of this august body were protected, however, by an adamant secretary who was thoroughly out of patience with officials who were unable "to see some delegation" on their own. Grotewohl's office then vainly attempted to reach Leuschner, the chief planner, and to have him take charge, but he too was attending the Politburo meeting. It was probably the police who on their own succeeded in reaching the Politburo. Even then, apparently, Grotewohl did not fully grasp the significance of the report and asked that Fritz Selbmann meet with the delegation. By this time the belligerence of the marchers made it impossible for Selbmann even to be heard. This complete mishandling of the early crisis cost the regime dearly.⁴⁶

The Stalinist DDR Leaders Fight Economic Disaster and Russian Efforts To Change Course

But much more was involved. The leadership of the DDR was in a complex and difficult predicament precisely at that moment. We have already noted the important change in the Moscow leadership and Malenkov's insistence on a reorientation of policy. Only after two explicit requests and the forceful intervention of High Commissioner Semyonov (successor to the Soviet Control Commission which had been abolished on May 28), did Ulbricht yield to pressure and promulgate the New Course. Prior to its adoption, though, the Minister of Finance, acting under strict orders, had raised prices and some transportation rates, a move as usual hailed as progress in the DDR press.

It should be recalled that the SED leadership, at least after the beginning of the year, was quite aware of the desperate condition of the economy. A call for help had gone out to the Kremlin at the beginning of April. The Kremlin sent back a negative reply by mid-April which also contained the initial request that the SED change its prevailing tough policy and adopt the New Course. The formerly docile Ulbricht had, as we know, stood his ground.⁴⁷ Thrown back on his own resources and in accordance with his "soundly Stalinist" economic views, Ulbricht was now determined to postpone no longer the much debated decision to raise the work norms.

Even when Ulbricht found that he had no choice but to submit to Semyonov's dictation of the Kremlin's New Course policy, the manner in which Ulbricht announced the change was designed to express as clearly as possible his dissociation from it. The June 11 issue of Neues Deutschland which carried the unexplained New Course pronouncement also contained a leading article ("On the Patriotism of the People") which pursued the old line and described the workers' enthusiasm for stepping up the work norms. The retention of the work norms increase was either a matter of continued defiance of Moscow on Ulbricht's part or a compromise concession which he exacted from Semyonov for his surrender to the new policy. An article published by the official Soviet newspaper in Berlin on June 13 quite clearly conveyed to alert readers the dissatisfaction of Soviet authorities with Ulbricht's passive resistance.⁴⁸ Surprisingly, the article included some self-criticism by blaming some of the mistakes on "the former Soviet Control Commission" and stressed that the decision on the New Course was especially important to further the "great goal of reuniting the German people."

The Kremlin's urgent wish to secure and advance the New Course was hardly based on any superior understanding of the troubled DDR scene, but was doubtless regarded as an important move in the field of foreign policy. It was apparently the goal of Malenkov and Lavrenti P. Beria, his all-powerful chief of security police, to bring about a relaxation of tensions with the West. There are strong indications that the new Moscow leadership had extended feelers to Churchill and was contemplating a basic change in its German policy, even to the point of facilitating the reunification of Germany. Malenkov's far-from-secure position would be markedly

improved if he could reach a major detente with the West. His plan, which clearly required reduction in tensions within the DDR, had sharply negative implications for Ulbricht's future.

An Internal Split in the DDR Leadership Complicates the Problem of Response

This leads to a further factor that must be unraveled before it is possible to understand the DDR leadership's complex involvements during the crucial days. For some time, an oppositional group had begun to emerge within the ruling circle. Its principals were Wilhelm Zaisser, a long-time Communist, the "General Gomez" of the Spanish Civil War and now Minister of State Security and Member of the Politburo; and Rudolf Herrnstadt, another old Communist with extensive Soviet experience, chief editor of the Neues Deutschland, and a candidate member of the Politburo. These men and their friends, such as Hans Jendretzsky, First Secretary of the Berlin SED and also a Politburo candidate member, were firmly convinced of the need for the New Course policy which they were disposed to give a very broad interpretation.⁴⁹

A political program was drafted by Herrnstadt, either at the group's initiative or at Moscow's request, that condemned the current policy orientation as wrong because it had widened the gap between party and people. It held that a new approach would require substantial reform, a new economic policy, and a drastic cleanup among the party's cadres. Only thus could the SED really become a "party of the people." One oppositionist, Franz Dahlem, prematurely disclosed the plan and the opposition was forced to present their ideas to the Politburo. Their plan, which was at least tacitly supported by Semyonov, included the ouster of Ulbricht and his replacement by Herrnstadt, while Zaisser was to take over the Ministry of Interior. As far as can be determined, this was the critical issue before the Politburo meeting on June 16;⁵⁰ thus Ulbricht was engaged in a basic policy struggle that involved his political survival. Of the Politburo's fourteen members, four were siding with the Zaisser-Herrnstadt group and two equally clearly with Ulbricht, while the rest were fence-sitting even though probably sympathetic to Ulbricht.

As Minor Conciliation Efforts Fail, Party Leaders Meet and Set an Official Position

Clearly, the events of June 16 overtook the DDR leadership at a moment of profound internal crisis; this sharply reduced its capacity to deal decisively with the delegation of workers. When the crucial concession on work norms was finally made under insurgent pressure, it was no longer sufficiently meaningful to the aroused rebels. By the afternoon of June 16, their initial economic demands had changed into political demands. Only at the risk of self-destruction could the regime meet these demands. At this critical juncture, the government could only hope to retrieve some of its lost ground by propagandistic means or by the use of force.

On the evening of June 16 at 8 p.m., the party leadership held a meeting for 3,000 party functionaries. Without explicitly referring to the day's uprising, the leadership turned to self-criticism and self-justification. Grotewohl's speech⁵¹ stressed that the purely administrative decision on the norms had been wrong and that the matter would be fully presented to the Central Committee, to which the Politburo would hold itself accountable. Whatever errors the government had made, he argued, had been animated by the wish to promote the public good in the face of severe economic difficulties. Some of these difficulties had been due to heavy and unexpected expenditures for defensive measures forced upon the DDR by threats from the West. In addition, these difficulties had been further aggravated by the efforts of class enemies who were responsible for tax deficits and inadequate deliveries and had even resorted to open resistance. Whatever wider effects Prime Minister Grotewohl's words might have had were doubtless lost by the fact that no newspapers appeared in East Berlin on June 17.

The regime's propaganda effort was given further guidance when H. Axen, the head of Agitprop, who was charged with disseminating the official view, met functionaries and journalists on June 17 to set forth the official line on the uprising: Foreign agents, manipulated by the West, notably the United States, had stirred up the troubles; their aim was to undermine efforts at a German solution and to counteract Moscow's rapprochement with other powers. Considering the speed with which events were unrolling, these propaganda efforts had little if any short-run effect. Earlier opportunities for effective persuasive or conciliatory moves had been irretrievably lost.

The East German Regime Is Unable To Rely on Its Security Forces

When it came to the use of force, the principal resources at the government's disposal were the police formations already discussed. Their encounters with the insurgent crowds strongly implied that a large number of the regular People's Police were unreliable and that there were questions even about the KVP, which was to be used principally in conjunction with Soviet troops. The few guard units of the Ministry of State Security proved their worth, fighting alongside Soviet troops, but they were a relatively small force.⁵²

The seriousness of the police problem is indicated by the extensive punitive measures to which the regime later resorted. For example, in Zwickau three troopers of the KVP were executed, 826 NCOs and privates jailed, 134 officers stripped of their rank, and 72 units converted into probationary companies.⁵³

The Extent and Strength of the Soviet Intervention; Soviet Casualties

Under these circumstances, intervention by Soviet military forces was inevitable. It is not known how the Soviet authorities reached the decision to intervene, but it is fairly clear that

they, too, were surprised by the speed and scope of the uprising. From the substantial Soviet forces deployed in the DDR at the time (30 divisions, about 300,000 men), an impressive array was dispatched to Berlin and to a large number of other centers during the night of June 16th and the early morning hours of the 17th.

An unofficial U.S. military appraisal at the time concluded that by nightfall of June 17, 25,000 troops and 300 tanks had been massed in Berlin;⁵⁴ in Leipzig alone, there was a concentration of 275 tanks.⁵⁵ Soviet military force was used in a total of 121 localities, while a state of siege or martial law was proclaimed in 10 of the 14 DDR districts.⁵⁶ The broad spread of the Soviet "peace-keeping" effort shows the deep Soviet concern over the course of events—the first major outbreak in the Communist world since the 1921 Kronstadt rising when Russian sailors and workers, revolutionaries themselves, turned against the revolution they had helped to bring about.

Soviet forces were initially employed with visible restraint. There is reason to believe that the KVP was not permitted to use its firearms without the express authorization of Soviet commanders. As was the case at the House of Ministries, this appears to have been given only when the situation became precarious. When Soviet commanders decided to act, their intervention was decisive and in a few instances possibly ruthless, though occasionally Soviet unit commanders were described as polite and conciliatory. Some accounts also indicate that Soviet soldiers showed sympathy for the striking workers that resulted in violations of military discipline and subsequent punishment. According to Western estimates, Soviet troop losses included 18 dead and 126 wounded; DDR losses, 116 dead (apparently both military and civilian) and 645 wounded.⁵⁷

Western Reactions to the Soviet Intervention and Communist Charges and Concessions

How did the outside world react to the rising and its suppression? The Western reaction was marked by surprise, possibly by initial difficulties in interpreting the real significance of the events, and last but not least by an apparent lack of policy planning for the aftermath of Stalin's death. West German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer, in a restrained speech to the Bundestag on June 17, declared the deep sympathy of the German people in this struggle for liberation and reaffirmed West Germany's desire for reunification. Early on the morning of June 17th a West Berlin trade union leader, Erich Scharnowski, called for the solidarity of West German workers with the building workers of East Berlin in a statement over the RIAS station, but this was roundly attacked in the Bonn parliament as a dangerous provocation and "incomprehensible irresponsibility." Only on June 18 did the three allied military commandants in West Berlin protest "the irresponsible resort to military force" against the movement of June 17.

In an answer on June 22,⁵⁸ General Dibrova described the measures as "absolutely essential to end arson and other excesses committed by groups of agents provocateurs and Fascists dispatched from West Berlin." The Western commandants' demand that the state of siege be lifted was rejected.

A conventional exchange of messages between the German and the Western allied governments followed. Adenauer asked the United States to do everything possible to bring about unity and freedom for the whole German people. Western heads of government expressed their admiration for the insurgents and reaffirmed their concern for a peaceful solution of the German problem.

In two letters to Chancellor Adenauer, U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower again expressed the American stand that free elections in Germany were the only path to reunification and repudiated Soviet and DDR allegations, declaring "that no provocateur of any nationality can persuade human beings to stand up in front of rumbling tanks with sticks and stones. . . ." In pointing out that the fighters were workers and not bourgeois reactionaries, "the same workers . . . in whose name the Kremlin has falsely and cynically built their [sic]. . . farflung workers' paradise," he approached the heart of the issue.⁵⁹

Simultaneously, Soviet and DDR propaganda about the causes and character of the events of June 16 and 17 continued to develop the themes of subversion and external instigation, conceding, however, that these "agents" had been able to exploit certain DDR policy mistakes and real grievances of the East Germans. On June 19, Pravda published a Neues Deutschland lead article of June 18, expressing shame that Berlin's workers had failed to control the disturbances themselves, thus requiring the occupying power to impose a state of siege to represent the German interest "with the requisite determination." Beginning on June 23, Pravda began to devote unusual attention to the German uprising. From this, its readers could only gain the impression that the upheaval had been widespread and of great importance.⁶⁰

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

While coercive measures had crushed the uprising, strikes and other manifestations of unrest continued until June 21 and in some instances later, even in the face of martial law. Some were in the nature of workers' protests against the arrest and imprisonment of their friends.⁶¹

Soviet Economic Concessions Permit the DDR to Ease Living Conditions

Having rescued the DDR and the Ulbricht group, the Soviet government was now committed to sustaining them. Through an agreement reached in Moscow in August, reparations were at last ended, occupation costs reduced, and the remaining 33 Soviet-held industries returned to DDR control—save the most important, the huge uranium-producing Wismuth A.G. Formerly refused credits were now granted.⁶²

Saved in the nick of time, the Ulbricht regime proceeded to buttress its precarious hold. It now demonstrated its willingness to give some substance to the New Course through economic and political concessions.⁶³ Work norms were returned to their earlier level, although efforts to promote voluntary increases were continued. Some arrangements were made to provide ampler food supplies and to improve wages, retirement incomes, and other social security benefits. The government explained that resources had become available for these and other purposes because heavy-industry investment and military expenditures had been curtailed. Agricultural collectivization came to a temporary halt, and the remnants of private business were given a breathing spell. While confirming the New Course, the 15th plenary session of the SED Central Committee was careful to point out that the party had been correct in beginning to build the foundations of socialism.

A Loosening of Constraints on Political Activity and Personal Freedoms

These pacifying economic measures were accompanied by some relaxation in other fields. Following Soviet "suggestions," it was considered politic to resume public recognition of the moribund partnership with non-Communist parties. Immediately after June 17, Semyonov himself conferred with representatives of the DDR's emasculated CDU and LDP⁶⁴ and encouraged them to make nominations for government positions. All this was safe enough, since the parties had already been thoroughly tamed.

The SED mounted a sweeping campaign of propaganda and justification with the active participation of key members of the government. In the course of meetings conducted by Ulbricht and Grotewohl in a number of large plants, workers enjoyed unprecedented opportunities for free and provocative speech. On a few such occasions, some of the toughest questions and bitterest complaints against the regime were addressed to the leaders in person.⁶⁵ For a while at least, it was also deemed the better part of wisdom to leave the churches and their faithful flocks unchallenged and to grant some latitude to scholars and artists.

Ulbricht Moves Against Insurgent Leadership and His Intra-Party Opposition

On the other hand, a wave of "disappearances," arrests, and prosecutions continued for weeks and months; its statistical dimensions convey some idea of the regime's vengefulness.⁶⁶ In view of the wide popular support for the uprising and the involvement of SED elements, both SED functionaries and rank-and-file members were subjected to punitive measures. There were show trials and vigilance campaigns to ferret out leaders of the insurrection. Despite this reprisal atmosphere, however, a substantial number of prisoners who were not connected with the uprising were released.

The SED leadership, pulled back from the brink of the political abyss, now settled accounts with its party opposition. Having carefully avoided assembling the Central Committee in plenary session before June 17 for fear of giving the Zaisser-Herrnstadt group a chance to oust him, Ulbricht called two meetings in rapid succession. At the 15th plenary session, July 24-26, Zaisser and Herrnstadt were deprived of all functions, and in January 1954 they were stripped of party membership. As members of the same faction, Jendretzky and two other Politburo candidate members lost their party positions. The liquidation of their presumed patron and fellow plotter in Moscow, Beria (arrested in Moscow on June 26), was another political windfall for Ulbricht. Henceforth, Ulbricht was to stand firmly entrenched, an enduring symbol of Stalinist orthodoxy.

The Uprising Strengthens Ulbricht and Makes German Reunification Less Likely

What of the overall results? There was to be no genuine political settlement, only a tactical retreat by the ruling party comparable to Lenin's adoption of the New Economic Policy after the defeat of the Kronstadt rebellion. The irony of the uprising was that the very regime it had sought to undo (or at least to transform) now stood far stronger than before. Sharpened by the experience, the regime was to resume its chosen goals within two years. Despite continued internal disaffection and frustration, the slim chances for effective resistance were further minimized by the consolidation of the regime. The uprising was the first of the great disturbances in the Soviet bloc, but, unlike the later Polish case, it led to the strengthening of the dictatorship. Yet the uprising clearly served notice of the vulnerability of a totalitarian system to internal surprise attack.

Finally, the repercussions of the uprising had a critical bearing on East-West relationships. The brief possibility of relaxation and compromise following Stalin's death, latent in the Malenkov-Beria maneuvers in Russia, which had shown some promise of facilitating a realistic solution of the German problem, was lost. East and West were to remain entrenched in fixed policy positions, which engendered successive proposals for negotiations that neither side could take seriously without political surrender. In a tragic paradox, the very uprising that was to become a symbol of unity for Germans in the West had, through the consequences of its fall, made the division more enduring than before.⁸⁷

NOTES

¹Willy Brandt, in "Die Bedeutung der Massenflucht aus der Sowjetzone" ("The Significance of the Mass Flight From the Soviet Zone"), Gewerkschaftliche Monatshefte (Köln) (April 1953), cites figures from the Weekly Report (No. 9, 1953) of the (West German) Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung (German Institute for Economic Research); and, Walter Hubatsch, Die Deutsche Frage (The German Question) (Würzburg, 1961), p. 115.

²See, for instance, Siegfried Mampel, Die Volkdemokratische Ordnung in Mitteldeutschland (The System of the People's Democracy in Central Germany) (Frankfurt, Bonn: A. Metzner, 1963), pp. 38 ff; Hans Schuetze, "Volkdemokratie" in Mitteldeutschland ("People's Democracy" in Central Germany) (Hanover: Niedersächsische Landeszentrale für Politische Bildung, 1960), pp. 44ff, 61ff.

³Werner Schulz, Die Verfassung der "Deutschen Demokratischen Republik" (The Constitution of the "German Democratic Republic") (Frankfurt: Verlag für Internationalen Kulturaustausch, 1959), passim, especially pp. 62-64. Examining the DDR constitution itself, Schulz concludes that its formulas provided the fullest opportunity for the unlimited exercise of power by any one political group.

⁴Recently East German historians have begun to examine the SED's rise to power and the reduction of the non-Communist parties to impotence. See "Problems of the Alliance Policy of the SED," Einheit (East Berlin), XIX (April 1964), 113-20.

⁵Carola Stern, Die SED. Ein Handbuch (The SED: A Handbook) (Köln: Verlag für Politik und Wirtschaft, 1954), pp. 173ff. The author defines a New Type party as one which, while unconditionally acknowledging Stalinist policies and practicing a tough hierarchic "democratic centralism," would forge the state into an effective party instrument capable of promoting an unyielding class struggle. See also Carola Stern, Porträt einer Bolschewistischen Partei (Portrait of a Bolshevik Party) (Köln: Verlag für Politik und Wirtschaft, 1957), pp. 78-80; and Ernst Richert, Macht ohne Mandat (Power Without Mandate) (2d rev. ed.; Köln: Opladen, 1963), pp. 29ff.

⁶On Ulbricht's career, see Carola Stern, Ulbricht, Eine politische Biographie (Ulbricht, A Political Biography) (Köln: Klepenheuer und Witsch, 1964). On Grotewohl, see O. Pfefferkorn, SBZ Archiv (Köln), IV (August 20, 1953), 253-54; on Pieck, see O. Pfefferkorn, SBZ Archiv (Köln), IV (December 20, 1953), 379-80. After Pieck's death in 1960, his function was assumed by Ulbricht as head of a Council of State.

⁷These political realities have been carefully explored in Ernst Richert, Macht ohne Mandat (2d rev. ed., Köln: Opladen, 1963).

⁸Cited by Karl W. Fricke, Selbstbehauptung und Widerstand in der Sowjetischen Besatzungszone Deutschlands (Self-Preservation and Resistance in the Soviet Zone of Germany) (Bonner Berichte aus Mittelund Ostdeutschland series) (Bonn: BMGF, 1964), p. 91. How the announcement about building the foundations of socialism was received among important SED functionaries is illustrated from personal experience in the East German Planning Commission by Fritz Schenk, Im Vorzimmer der Diktatur. 12 Jahre Pankow (Köln: Klepenheuer und Witsch, 1962), pp. 140-41.

⁹Richard Lukas, Zehn Jahre Sowjetische Besatzungszone (Mainz: Deutscher Fachschriften-Verlag, 1955), p. 93.

¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 93ff; Fricko, Selbstbehauptung und Widerstand...; Storn, Porträt einer Bolschewistischen Partei, pp. 138ff; W. Ruehmland, Mitteldeutschland, Moskaus westliche Provinz (Central Germany: Moscow's Western Province) (Stuttgart: F. Vorwerk, 1959) esp. pp. 99ff, 133ff, 205ff, 227ff; F. Falter, Und hab mich heimlich davon gemacht (And Have Secretly Made Off) (Pamphlet, n.d.), passim.; Gerd Friedrich, Die Freie Deutsche Jugend—Auftrag und Entwicklung (The Free German Youth-Mandate and Development) (Köln: Rot-Weiss-Bücher, 1953); Bundesministerium für Gesamtdeutsche Fragen (BMGF, Federal Ministry for All-German Affairs), Die Ausbeutung der menschlichen Arbeitskraft in der Sowjetzone (The Exploitation of Human Labor in the Soviet Zone), in series, Bonner Berichte aus Mittel- und Ostdeutschland (Bonn: BMGF, 1952), pp. 55ff; Felix Poshler, Der Untergang des privaten Einzelhandels in der Sowjetischen Besatzungszone (The Destruction of Private Retail Trade in the Soviet Zone), in Bonner Berichte aus Mittel- und Ostdeutschland (Bonn: BMGF, 1952); Hans Koehler, "Der Situation der Bauern in der Sowjetzone" ("Situation of the Farmers in the Soviet Zone"), SBZ Archiv (Köln), IV (February 20, 1953), 53ff.

¹¹ See O. Walther, Verwaltung, Lenkung und Planung der Wirtschaft in der SBZ (Administration, Direction and Planning of the SBZ Economy) (Bonner Berichte aus Mittel- und Ostdeutschland series) (Bonn: BMGF, 1953), pp. 36ff.

¹² On some of these developments, see reports of Alfred Leutwein, "Betriebskollektivverträge nach Diktat" ("Collective Contracts in Shops Under Dictation"), SBZ Archiv (Köln) IV (May 5, 1953), 132ff; and Alfred Leutwein, "Ursachen und Folgen der administrativen Normenerhöhung" ("Causes and Consequences of the Norms Increase by Administrative Action"), SBZ Archiv (Köln) IV, (June 20, 1953), 186ff.

¹³ BMGF, Die Ausbeutung der menschlichen Arbeitskraft in der Sowjetzone, on p. 82 gives further details of the workings of the rationing system.

¹⁴ Max Gustav Lange, Wissenschaft im Totalitären Staat (Science in the Totalitarian State) (Stuttgart: Ring-Verlag, 1955) enlarges on this development, especially in Chap. XII, pp. 270ff; M. G. Lange, Totalitäre Erziehung (Stuttgart and Düsseldorf, 1954) discusses management of the educational system below the college level, especially in Pt. IV, pp. 367ff.

¹⁵ N.a., The Roman Catholic Church in Berlin and in the Soviet Zone of Germany (Berlin, 1959), discusses the relationship between the regime and the Catholic Church: see specifically p. 56 for this period.

¹⁶ Friedrich, Die Freie Deutsche Jugend, p. 157, takes up the period of January to March 1953.

¹⁷ Ruehmland, Mitteldeutschland, Moskaus westliche Provinz, pp. 99ff, supplies basic information; see also "Militär Politik," in Bundesministerium für Gesamtdeutsche Fragen (BMGF), SBZ von A bis Z: Ein Taschen- und Nachschlagebuch über die Sowjetische Besatzungszone Deutschlands (8th ed.; Bonn: BMGF, 1963), pp. 316-22; "Kasernierte Volkspolizei," in SBZ von A bis Z, Ein Taschen und Nachschlagebuch, p. 235; Theodore Falk, Militarism in the Soviet Zone (Pamphlet; Bonn, 1961); K. Stiebeler, "Die Verlorenen Bataillone" ("The Lost Battalions"), Der Monat (Berlin) (February 1953), 480ff.

¹⁸ For the text of the statute and some comments, see Mampel, Die Volksdemokratische Ordnung in Mitteldeutschland, pp. 39 and 102ff; further comment in Schuetze, Volksdemokratie in Mitteldeutschland, pp. 116ff.

¹⁹ The following have been consulted mainly for their data and interpretations of the refugee problem: "Der Aufstand im Juni. Ein dokumentarischer Bericht," Der Monat (September 1953), Pt. I, pp. 594ff (October 1953), Pt. II, pp. 45ff; G. Birkenfeld, Milo Dor, et al., Spring in die Freiheit (Leap into Freedom) (Ulm: Knorr and Hirth, 1953); BMGF, Es Geschah im Juni 1953, Fakten und Daten (It Happened in June 1953, Facts and Dates), in Bonner Berichte aus Mittel- und Ostdeutschland series (Bonn, Berlin: BMGF, 1963), pp. 18ff; "Flüchtlinge" ("Refugees"), in SBZ von A bis Z, Ein Taschen und Nachschlagebuch, pp. 146ff; Regina Bohne, "Die Dritte

Welle. Zahlen zur Flucht aus der Ostzone" ("The Third Wave: Statistics on the Flight from the Eastern Zone"), Frankfurter Hefte (Frankfurt) (April 8, 1953), 278ff; B. von Nottbeck, "Gründe und Hintergründe der Zonenflucht" ("Causes and Motivations of the Flight from the Zone"), SBZ Archiv (Köln) (April 20, 1953), 114ff; Brandt, "Die Bedeutung der Massenflucht aus der Sowjetzone," 226ff; Friedrich, Die Freie Deutsche Jugend, pp. 157ff; Stiehler, "Die Verlorenen Bataillone," pp. 480ff.

²⁰ Bohne, "Die Dritte Welle."

²¹ Friedrich, Die Freie Deutsche Jugend, p. 157.

²² Nottbeck, "Gründe und Hintergründe der Zonenflucht."

²³ Both references come from Fricke, Selbstbehauptung und Widerstand in der Sowjetischen Besatzungszone Deutschlands.

²⁴ Friedrich, Die Freie Deutsche Jugend, p. 164; "Der Aufstand im Juni," Der Monat (September 1953) p. 597; BMGF, Revolt in June, Documents and Reports on the People's Uprising in East Berlin and the Soviet Zone of Germany (Bonn: BMGF, n.d.), p. 2.

²⁵ Die Freiheit (Halle) (April 13, 1953); Leipziger Volksblatt (Leipzig) (May 23, 1953).

²⁶ For the texts of these statements, see BMGF, Der Volksaufstand vom 17 Juni 1953 (Bonner Berichte aus Mittel- und Ostdeutschland series) (Bonn: BMGF), Documents 15 to 17.

²⁷ On all this, see Stern, Ulbricht, Eine politische Biographie, Ch. V, pp. 165ff. For the events of the uprising and its repression, various sources have been used. Among the most helpful: BMGF, Es Geschah im Juni, 1953. Fakten und Daten; BMGF, Der Volksaufstand vom 17 Juni 1953; "Der Aufstand im Juni, ein dokumentarischer Bericht," Der Monat (September 1953), p. 594ff; George Sherran, East Germany, The June Days (St. Antony's Papers on Soviet Affairs) (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955); Stefan Brant, The East German Rising: 17th June 1953 (New York: Praeger, 1957); Rainer Hildebrandt, The Explosion: The Uprising Behind the Iron Curtain (New York: Duell, Sloane & Pearce, 1955); Arno Scholz, W. Nieke, and G. Vetter, Panzer am Potsdamer Platz (Tanks on Potsdam Square) (Berlin, Grunewald: Arani, 1954); Ostbüro der Sozialdemokratischen Partei Deutschlands (SPD), Monatsbericht über die Entwicklung in der Sowjetzone im Juni 1953 (Monthly Report on Developments in the Soviet Zone in June 1953) (Mimeographed report; Bonn: German Social Democratic Party, 1953).

²⁸ For the whole text of the article, see BMGF, Der Volksaufstand vom 17 Juni 1953, pp. 44ff. For the article in Neues Deutschland, see Arnulf Baring, Der 17. Juni 1953, in Bonner Berichte aus Mittel- und Ostdeutschland series (Bonn: BMGF, 1957), p. 25.

²⁹ Fritz Schenk, Im Vorzimmer der Diktatur. 12 Jahre Pankow, pp. 195-97.

³⁰ Note, for instance, Brant, The East German Rising, Chs. 8 and 9 on farmers; BMGF, Es Geschah im Juni 1953, pp. 30ff; Ostbüro der SPD, Monatsbericht über die Entwicklung in der Sowjetzone im Juni 1953, Annex, pp. 7-36.

³¹ BMGF, Es Geschah im Juni 1953, p. 37.

³² According to ibid., p. 23, and "Der Aufstand im Juni," Der Monat (September 1953), 621, police fired the shots; while Brant, The East German Rising, p. 131, conveys the impression that Soviet tanks did the firing.

³³ BMGF, Es Geschah im Juni 1953, Fakten und Daten, is the source for these figures. It is a recent (May 1963) and most useful document, but unfortunately it does not state what criteria were used to define an "uprising of the population."

³⁴ Fricke, Selbstbehauptung und Widerstand in der Sowjetischen Besatzungszone Deutschlands, cites the Report to the 15th Plenary Meeting of the SED Central Committee.

¹⁵ These are the figures found in BMGF, Es geschah im Juni 1953, Fakten und Daten, p. 42. See also BMGF, SBZ von A bis Z. Ein Taschen- und Nachschlagebuch, 8th ed., p. 229. The SED Ministry of State Security reported on June 25, 1953, that 19 participants were killed and 120 (including 61 "bystanders") were injured, as cited in BMGF, The Soviet Occupation Zone 1945-1953 (Bonn: BMGF, 1953), p. 64. Scholz, et al., Panzer am Potsdamer Platz, estimate 3,000 dead and wounded. An independent West German organization of lawyers, the Untersuchungsausschuss freier Juristen, reported in their Pressedienst on June 4, 1957, that they had individually recorded 832 sentences; of these, 17 were death sentences, one life imprisonment. This expert organization's estimate of the total number sentenced is 1,500. Arnulf Baring, in his Der 17. Juni 1953, p. 58, speaks of 21 killed, a figure he repeats in a recent article which has appeared since the completion of this study: "Die Russen Schossen in die Luft," Der Spiegel (Hamburg) (June 16, 1965), 78-88. Both the SED and the Baring figures presumably relate only to the victims of direct Soviet military action.

¹⁶ For these questions, see Brant, The East German Rising, pp. 87ff; "Der Aufstand im Juni," Der Monat (October 1953), 56; Scholz, et al., Panzer am Potsdamer Platz, p. 220.

¹⁷ BMGF, Es geschah im Juni 1953. Fakten und Daten, p. 38.

¹⁸ Ernst Riemschneider, "The People of June 17, 1953" (unpublished manuscript). This study was based on data supplied by 1,200 participants in strikes and demonstrations throughout the DDR, more than half of whom had reported in person to the "Fighting Group against Inhumanity" in West Berlin and given information about themselves and those associated with them in the uprising.

¹⁹ For instance, Werner Zimmerman, "Die Träger des Widerstandes" ("The Supporters of the Resistance"), SBZ Archiv (Köln) (October 20, 1953), 309ff, a very early study.

²⁰ Dr. H. Koehler, cited by Arnulf Baring, Der 17. Juni 1953, p. 40.

²¹ Scholz, et al., Panzer am Potsdamer Platz, p. 157, speaks of 150 localities with a population of 5,000 and over and another 150 of less than 5,000.

²² For this, see Arnulf Baring, Der 17. Juni 1953, pp. 49ff., and his careful analysis of the non-participants, pp. 43ff. For Grotewohl's view, see n. 34 above.

²³ See especially Baring, Der 17. Juni 1953, pp. 59ff.

²⁴ Sherman, East Germany, The June Days, pp. 60ff.

²⁵ For some significant observations on this point, as it affected officials in the Planning Commission, see Schenk, Im Vorzimmer der Diktatur, pp. 185ff.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 195-97. For possible modifications of this account, see Baring's discussion, Der 17. Juni 1953, pp. 63ff.

²⁷ For an amplification of this section, see Stern, Ulbricht, Eine politische Biographie, pp. 165ff; Schenk, Im Vorzimmer der Diktatur, pp. 185ff, brings out how deeply agitated key members of the planning staff were at Moscow's refusal of help and its demands for a policy change. See also Stern, Porträt einer Bolschewistischen Partei, pp. 158-59, for a description of the dilemma facing lower functionaries charged with implementing an abrupt policy shift.

²⁸ "Important Resolution," Die Tägliche Rundschau (June 13, 1953).

²⁹ On the whole range of questions, both of Soviet foreign policy and its resumed relationship to the Zaisser-Herrnstadt faction, see Stern, Ulbricht, eine politische Biographie, Ch. V, who owes a good deal to an unpublished memorandum by Heinz Brandt, a former member of the SED leadership. Der Spiegel (Hamburg), No. 26 (1964), contains passages from the Brandt memorandum. See also Flora Lewis, "Did Reds Nearly Jettison East Germany in 1953?" The Washington Post (October 3, 1960) "Outlook" section; Stefan Thomas, "Beyond the Wall," Survey (October 1962), 58; Fricke, Selbstbehauptung und Widerstand in der Sowjetischen Besatzungszone Deutschlands, p. 117, who refers to Khrushchev's speech of March 8, 1963, as

reported in Neues Deutschland of March 14, 1963. While Baring, in Der 17. Juni 1953, pp. 63ff., and in his 1965 article stresses equally the elements of surprise and helplessness in the SED apparatus, he represents the Politburo as having been more accessible and more responsive to the events.

⁶⁰ Stern, Ulbricht, Eine politische Biographie, p. 174.

⁶¹ Reprinted in BMGF, Der Volksaufstand vom 17 Juni 1953, pp. 39ff., from Neues Deutschland (June 18, 1953).

⁶² Helmut Bohn and Andere, Die Aufrüstung in der SBZ (Rearmament in the Soviet Zone), in Bonner Berichte aus Mittel- und Ostdeutschland series (2d ed.; Bonn: BMGF, 1960), pp. 104, 134ff; BMGF, SBZ von A bis Z, 8th ed., p. 318. Baring, Der 17. Juni 1953, pp. 66ff. declares that the GUP was generally reliable. There is a lack of precise information on this subject in the available literature.

⁶³ Ostbüro der SPD, Monatsbericht über die Entwicklung in der Sowjetzone im Juni 1953, p. 14.

⁶⁴ Quoted in Time (June 29, 1953), p. 20.

⁶⁵ "Der Aufstand im Juni," Der Monat (October 1953), 66; Sherman, East Germany, The June Days, p. 51, speaks of 25,000 troops in East Berlin by noon, units of a T-34 tank division and a mechanized division of armored cars. See also Scholz, et al., Panzer am Potsdamer Platz, pp. 88, 92.

⁶⁶ BMGF, Es geschah im Juni 1953, Fakten und Daten, p. 38.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 42; BMGF, SBZ von A bis Z, 8th ed., p. 229. On the problematic character of such data, see note 35 above.

⁶⁸ See BMGF, Der Volksaufstand vom 17 Juni 1953, p. 85, for the wording.

⁶⁹ Letters from President Eisenhower to Chancellor Adenauer. See Glen D. Camp, "City in the Middle: Berlin in the East-West Struggle 1950-53" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1963), pp. 339ff. and his appraisal of the circumstances. See also the bitterly critical remarks on the American failure to capitalize imaginatively "on a single thing that has come to pass," by Emmet J. Hughes, The Ordeal of Power (New York: Dell, 1964), pp. 236ff.

⁷⁰ For this subject, see Rutgers University, Department of Sociology, Soviet Reporting on the East German Uprisings of June 1953 (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University, n.d.); Wolf Guenter Contius, Der 17. Juni in der Sowjetpresse, (Reprint from Ost-Europa; Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt, 1953).

⁷¹ "Der Aufstand im Juni," Der Monat (October 1953), p. 59.

⁷² See Schenk, Im Vorzimmer der Diktatur, pp. 231ff. for an interesting inside account; also Terence Prittle, Germany Divided (London: Hutchinson, 1961), pp. 146ff.; and Camp, "City in the Middle: Berlin in the East-West Struggle 1950-53," pp. 404-407, for significant political aspects of the Joint Communiqué issued in Moscow on August 22, 1953.

⁷³ A.N.P., "Eastern Germany Since the Risings of June 1953," The World Today (February 1953), 39ff.; Scholz, et al., Panzer am Potsdamer Platz, p. 159, for policy generally; Stern, Porträt einer Bolschewistische Partei, pp. 160ff.; and Fricke, Selbstbehauptung und Widerstand in der Sowjetischen Besatzungszone Deutschlands, passim.

⁷⁴ Ostbüro der SPD, Monatsbericht über die Entwicklung in der Sowjetzone im Juni 1953.

⁷⁵ See striking examples in reports of factory meetings with these leaders in BMGF, Der Volksaufstand vom 17 Juni 1953, pp. 71ff.

⁷⁶ "Biggest Wave of Arrests," SBZ Archiv, V (December 20, 1953); for the atmosphere, see Norbert Mühlen, "East Germany: The Date Is Still June 17," The Reporter (February 16, 1954), p. 14.

"Among the most thoughtful considerations of this question are Camp, "City in the Middle: Berlin in the East-West Struggle 1950-53," pp. 382ff., and Abraham Brumberg, "East Germany Gained Least for 1953 Revolt," The Washington Post (June 16, 1963), "Outlook" section.

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Chapter Seventeen

**GREECE
1946-1949**

by Charilaos G. Lagoudakis



GREECE (1946-1949)

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The Greek government, with substantial American assistance, beat back a Communist insurgency that was logistically supported by the Soviet bloc countries on Greece's northern borders.

BACKGROUND

The Communist party of Greece (KKE) and its allies had reason to believe at the end of World War II that Greece was vulnerable to insurgent operations that would open the way for a "people's democracy" of the type that came to characterize the Soviet satellites of Eastern Europe. Not only were the Greeks exhausted by war and enemy occupation, but many seemed sympathetic to the wartime Communist-controlled National Liberation Front (EAM), which they thought would bring them long-overdue ~~socio~~ social and economic reforms.

Relief and reform were essential, for at war's end most Greeks were struggling desperately to survive. Between 1941 and 1945 approximately half a million persons, out of a population of only seven and a half million, had died as a direct or indirect result of the war. Another million and a half had been driven from their homes. Malaria and tuberculosis were widespread, for the public health system had collapsed. Nor was there much hope for rapid recovery. Inflation had wiped out the country's capital resources. Unemployment and underemployment were compounded by wartime agricultural ravages which had lowered production to a third of the prewar total and by the virtual destruction of Greek industry. Public administration had suffered unprecedented dislocation. According to Greek government estimates, the country had suffered damages amounting to \$4 billion which affected the nation's communications system as well as the homes and property of its citizens.¹

The Communists' Wartime Efforts To Take Over Greece

During the war, the Communists were able to capture the major part of the Greek resistance movement against the German, Italian, and Bulgarian occupation forces. Working through their popular front, EAM, and its guerrilla force, ELAS (National Popular Liberation Army), the Greek Communists prepared the ground to seize power when the war ended. They made their first bid in March 1944, when EAM announced the formation of a "mountain government" (the

Political Committee for National Liberation, or PEEA) and challenged the authority of the Greek government-in-exile in Cairo. This move generated political strife among the Greeks and sparked a mutiny among their land and naval forces operating in the Near East. However, it revealed the intentions of EAM early enough to give the Greek government-in-exile and British authorities time to take the political and military measures necessary to prevent Greece from slipping into the Soviet Balkan orbit. The Communists thus failed in their first attempt* to seize power.²

In the fall and winter of 1944, after the Germans had withdrawn and British and Greek troops had returned to Greece, the Communists felt strong enough to make a second attempt. They refused to demobilize their army of guerrillas, which they claimed had a strength of 65,000 men, and deployed it throughout the countryside. Their underground strength was estimated at around 380,000 members of EAM-affiliated organizations, a strong base for political agitation. This time the Communists withdrew from the Greek Government of National Unity, under Prime Minister Georgios Papandreou,[†] which clung tenuously to life—their aim being to force the resignation of the prime minister and capture control of the government.

The EAM revolt began on December 3, 1944, when a mass demonstration in Athens' Constitution Square turned into a bloody riot. In the two months of fighting which followed, a Greek brigade and another contingent of about 2,000 Greek troops from the Middle East, aided by two British divisions, defeated the opposing forces. EAM's actions during this period exposed it as a Communist front, and the KKE was forced to terms at Varkiza on February 12, 1945.

The agreement reached at Varkiza did not destroy the Communists' military power, although many of the insurgents took advantage of the government's amnesty program and went home. More than 4,000 guerrillas crossed the frontiers into Albania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria, where they found sanctuary; and some 8,000 "bandits" remained hidden in the mountains of Greece. The Communists surrendered 40,000 weapons, many of them obsolete, but managed to keep most of their serviceable equipment.

Greek Sentiment Swings to the Right

This two-month "winter war" engendered bitterness and despair among the Greeks, inflicted further destruction and economic distress, and created an atmosphere conducive to political extremism. In revulsion against Communist tactics, Greek sentiment veered sharply to the right, a shift that was reflected in the first postwar elections on March 31, 1946. The

*See Chapter Six, "Greece (1942-1944)." ."

[†]In Papandreou's book, *The Liberation of Greece* (3d ed.; Athens: Greek Publishing Co., 1948), pp. 207, 209, 211, he noted that the leader of the Socialist Party (ELD), Alexandros Svolos, the representative of EAM in the Government of National Unity, told him on November 30, 1944, that the KKE had "suddenly" decided, due to "external direction," to terminate its cooperation with the government.

Communists chose to boycott these elections, taking their cue from the Soviet Union's refusal to join with the United States and Great Britain in observing the conduct of the voting.³

A conservative coalition, led by the old-time royalist Populist Party, received a large popular vote and thus obtained a strong majority in parliament. The Greek electorate decisively rejected the revolutionary left, and this pattern was repeated later in the year when a plebiscite on the monarchy returned King George II. Greek politics became polarized between right and left.

Greek Communists Turn to External Support for Another Attempt To Gain Power

Despite the election and plebiscite, the Greek Communists believed that they enjoyed far greater popular support than 9.3 percent of the electorate, their following as estimated by AMFOGE, the Allied Mission for Observing the Greek Elections.⁴ Furthermore, they apparently believed that the internal instability that plagued Greece would serve their ends. External support was also available. Marshal Tito of Yugoslavia seems to have promised full support to the KKE insurgency.⁵ According to a "most reliable" source, the KKE met with Bulgarian and Yugoslav representatives late in May 1946 at Goni in southern Bulgaria and, with Russian guidance, drew up plans for an insurgency in Greece that would result in the creation of an autonomous Macedonia under Yugoslav hegemony.⁶ True or not, the mere appearance of a Slavic-supported Communist conspiracy evoked a strong reaction among Greeks.

Diplomatic pressures were also exerted in support of the Greek Communists. At the Paris Peace Conference in the summer of 1946, the Yugoslavs demanded an independent Macedonia, and the Bulgarians pressed for control of western Thrace.⁷ The Ukrainian delegate to the United Nations Security Council charged on August 24, 1946, that "monarcho-fascist" Greeks were provoking border incidents in the Balkans. According to the delegate, the Greek government was conspiring to seize a portion of southern Albania and was persecuting the Slav minorities in northern Greece.⁸ These international moves coincided with the opening of the Communist insurgency within Greece.

Throughout 1946 the Communists in Greece increasingly resorted to open violence. By the fall, sporadic guerrilla activity, labeled officially as "banditry," was evident, and by the middle of the following year guerrilla warfare was in full swing.

In Economic Distress, Greece Calls for U.S. Aid

Meanwhile, Greece was barely managing to survive economically, notwithstanding \$700,000 foreign aid from the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Agency (UNRRA), Great Britain, and the United States.⁹ In early 1947 an American Economic Mission, under Paul A. Porter, reported that unless Greece received immediate assurances of large-scale military and financial aid, the authority of the elected Greek government would disintegrate, opening the way to skyrocketing inflation, strikes, riots, and public panic.¹⁰

intended to protest the holding, in spite of the Communist boycott, of the elections scheduled for the following day. The elections were conducted as planned, however, and the results, as noted above, strongly favored the right over the left.

Insurgent Attacks Grow Stronger

Aside from isolated forays into the interior of Greece, such as the attack on Litchorion, the insurgency in 1946 consisted mainly of bandit activities along Greece's northern frontiers. Small bands, operating across the frontiers, hit isolated targets. When pressed by local security forces, the attackers retreated beyond the frontier, where safety and supplies awaited them. Guerrilla attacks were directed against unarmed civilians, individuals and installations connected with the public services, and other objectives, the destruction of which would create economic, social, and political instability.¹⁶

In the course of a year, the bands grew into larger units, and their tactics shifted from hit-and-run raids to more nearly conventional military operations. Using both irregular guerrilla tactics and, when feasible, those suited to large-scale infantry attacks, the bands were able to establish a secure base in the Grammos-Vitsi area, at the juncture of the Albanian and Yugoslav frontiers. From this bastion the Communists were able to penetrate, by way of the Pindus Mountains, deep into southern Greece.¹⁷

The insurgents were successful in these early operations, largely because of administrative dislocation in Greece. Systematic thrusts at gendarmery patrols and outposts forced the poorly organized security detachments to consolidate, leaving many areas unprotected. The same tactics were employed against poorly trained army units with similar success, and soon the insurgents were able to establish their authority over large portions of rural Greece.¹⁸

By the spring of 1948, the guerrillas, using as bases the areas they controlled, were conducting raids against defenseless villages and towns in order to obtain provisions and manpower. As a result of the Communist offensive, about 40 percent of the population of northern Greece was made homeless. Understandably, these refugees were angered by acute shortages of food and by the government's failure either to protect them or provide for them. Nor were fear and discontent confined to the north; in the Peloponnese the mere presence of some 3,000 guerrillas so restricted freedom of movement that people had to travel in convoys. Throughout the nation, Greeks felt insecure and uncertain about the future.¹⁹

Organization and Leadership of the Communist Insurgents

The guerrilla organization that presented such a threat to Greece was known as the Democratic Army of Greece (DSE, for *Dimokratikós Stratós Elládos*) and was similar to the Communists' World War II military organization, ELAS. In Markos Vafiades, a refugee from Asia Minor who had been a tobacco worker in Kavalla, the postwar guerrilla forces found a dynamic

leader whose name became synonymous with the insurgency. Markos arrived in the mountains of Greece in August 1948 and began coordinating the scattered guerrilla bands. Toward the end of the year, he proclaimed the existence of a "General Command of the Democratic Army of Greece." Although the official date used by the Greek Communists for the creation of DSE was October 28, 1948--chosen to mark the sixth anniversary of the Italian Fascist attack on Greece--Markos' first order carried the date of November 20.²⁰

The DSE was designed to infiltrate deep behind government lines, to face up to superior enemy forces, and to combine heavy firepower with great maneuverability.²¹ To this end, it was organized into supply services, static garrisons, and fighting units. The fighting units were divided into independent companies, battalions, and larger units comparable to brigades and divisions. At one time there were 42 battalions, 23 brigades, and 8 divisions, in addition to 25 bi-companies and 18 independent units.²² Since the maximum strength of the guerrillas in the field probably did not surpass 28,000 at any given time, the guerrilla divisions obviously were unequal in strength to those of a conventional army.²³

Strength and Recruitment of Guerrilla Forces

By the end of 1947, there were about 18,000 armed Communist fighters inside Greece. These men, many of them veterans of World War II, formed an elite force with high morale. Beginning in 1948, guerrilla strength increased to between 20,000 and 28,000 men actually in the field, with another 10,000 to 20,000 trainees and replacements located outside Greece.²⁴

In the early stages of the insurgency, the appeal for volunteers elicited a prompt response from leftist elements of the population, who flocked in substantial numbers to the DSE. Many potential volunteers, however, hesitated to join the guerrillas after the announcement in 1947 of large-scale American aid to the Greek government. This hesitancy finally caused the guerrilla command to resort to impressment of villagers. The guerrillas also came to depend to a great extent on Slavic-speaking Greeks (Slavophones) in the north as a source of manpower. In January 1949, one observer estimated that about 40 percent of the DSE were Slavophones. Recruitment from all sources, averaging about 2,000 men per month, offset guerrilla casualties which, toward the end of 1948, reached 1,500 monthly. In 1949, as insurgent fortunes declined, recruiting became increasingly difficult; nevertheless, foreign "volunteers," though they may have been available, were never introduced into Greece. It is estimated that in the final days of the war the guerrillas, then 20,000 strong, included about 11,000 forced recruits who were poorly trained and kept in line mainly by terror.²⁵

Underground Strength, Organization, and Functions

In addition to active guerrilla fighters serving in the DSE, there were an estimated 50,000 members of the Communist underground within Greece. The latter were organized into

self-contained cells called autoámynae (self-defense). The primary function of this underground was to infiltrate Greek institutions, including the Orthodox Church.

The autoámyna was also responsible for furnishing intelligence to the guerrillas and denying information about Communist actions to the government. In its counterintelligence activities, the underground was supplemented by a special information service. Another underground function was terrorism, the principal task of the steni (narrow) autoámyna, which struck down enemies of the guerrilla movement. This organization, the secret police of the insurgency, was not unlike the infamous Nazi Gestapo or the Soviet NKVD.

The underground undertook intensive propaganda activities.¹⁶ In general the Communists tried to depict the guerrilla war as a truly popular uprising against the "monarcho-fascists" in power at Athens, and in doing so compared Markos and his followers to the Greek patriots who fought the War of Independence in the 1820's. Between January and October 1948, the underground distributed some 6.5 million copies of its propaganda-laden news bulletin.

Popular Support for the Guerrillas Wanes

Although the autoámyna, with its infiltration tactics and its intensive propagandizing, may initially have succeeded in confusing Greeks as to the true nature of the insurgency, the course of events after 1947 nullified its efforts. No amount of propaganda could transform the Communist-directed insurrection into a truly popular movement. It has been estimated that the intrinsic appeal of the insurgency was limited to less than two percent of the population, except among the Slav minority in Greek Macedonia. The meagerness of support was due to several factors: anticommunism on the part of most Greeks, the spirit of nationalism, the Slavic appearance of so many of the guerrillas, and the awareness that Yugoslavia and Bulgaria intended to partition off the Greek provinces of Macedonia and Thrace.

As a result, the Greek guerrillas were progressively deprived of domestic sources of supply, even for food, which originally had been available from unprotected villages. The guerrillas had obtained substantial provisions, however, from their early operations. According to official Greek government estimates, 1.3 million head of goats and sheep and more than 100,000 cattle and horses were driven off during the course of the insurgency. Rural sources of supply also dwindled as a result of the widespread displacement of persons that followed close upon the fighting and the government's evacuation of large numbers of peasants from indefensible northern parts of the country. Despite the autoámyna's efforts to terrorize the populace into aiding the insurgents, by the spring of 1948 the guerrillas had become heavily dependent on external assistance.²⁷

The Extent and Importance of External Sanctuary and Support

This outside assistance had begun soon after the Varkiza agreement of 1945, when the Greek Communist guerrillas took refuge in eight principal training camps in Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, and Albania.²⁸ Those camps supplied the DSE with trained officers and men. The centers at Roubik in Albania and Bulkes in Yugoslavia, for example, were reported to have graduated some 700 guerrilla leaders.²⁹ The training, however, was apparently not up to date, and guerrilla military leadership remained poor throughout the war.³⁰

The Communist states that bordered Greece provided medical support as well as technical assistance. Virtually all hospital facilities located in the southern parts of Albania, Bulgaria, and Yugoslavia were available to sick or wounded guerrillas. Among these sanctuaries were Skoplje and Bitoli in Yugoslavia. International assistance for the insurgents was stimulated by the Cominform, the organization charged with spreading communism.*

No estimate is available of the total amount of external aid afforded the insurgents in goods and services. Except for the initial stock of weapons hidden at the end of World War II, virtually all arms and equipment came from outside Greece, again mainly through Yugoslavia, Albania, and Bulgaria. The amount of funds and supplies collected in various Iron Curtain countries through local "Societies for Aid to the Greek People" can never be known, and there is little, if any, evidence at hand concerning the nature and amount of Soviet military aid.

Whether the Soviet Union's material assistance was large or small, it did give consistent diplomatic and political support to the Communist cause in Greece, as did its European satellites. Rumania, for example, provided facilities for the KKE clandestine radio, "Radio Free Greece," which broadcast both propaganda and directives to the guerrilla command and the underground in Greece. According to the United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans (UNSCOB), Soviet bloc propaganda, such as that emanating from Rumania, was "aggressive" and "of a subversive nature."³¹

Thanks to foreign assistance, the Communists were able to maintain an average of 25,000 guerrillas in the field, with another 10,000 to 20,000 men in training camps outside Greece. Since total guerrilla casualties for the four years of the insurgency were about 84,000, while

* The Cominform (Information Bureau of Communist Parties) was established in September 1947, several months after the Truman doctrine was proclaimed in support of Greece. The official communiqué about its establishment was published in *Pravda* on October 5, 1947. The Cominform included the Communist parties of nine European countries, but not the Greek and Albanian parties. Its headquarters were moved from Belgrade to Bucharest in June 1948 when Tito broke with Moscow. The weekly publication of the Cominform, *For a Lasting Peace—People's Democracy*, reflected the stand of international communism on the insurgency in Greece. The first issue was published on November 12, 1947. It was published in English and 17 other languages until the Cominform was dissolved on April 9, 1956. (See U.S. Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Strategy and Tactics of World Communism*, Report of the Sub-Committee, No. 5, Supplements I and II; Washington: Government Printing Office, 1948.)

some 30,000 insurgents survived the struggle, outside sources must have trained or otherwise supported some 100,000 men who served at one time or another in the guerrilla ranks.³²

Government Military Operations Confine Guerrillas to a Small Area

From mid-1948 on, the latent weakness within the Greek insurgent movement was exposed by both military and political crises. The military crisis arose when government forces, growing in power and skill, began a series of major attacks. In attempting to meet this threat, while at the same time maintaining the fiction of a "Free Greece" tucked away in the mountains, the guerrillas adopted a strategy that played into the hands of the government forces.

Committed to the defense of their mountain redoubts and therefore unable to employ the usual hit-and-run tactics, the Communists organized static defensive positions to protect the area over which they had gained control. During these defensive operations, deficiencies in officer training became apparent as DSE commanders proved incapable of keeping their units from being encircled and destroyed. Unceasing government pressure, mounting casualties, and the seemingly endless series of reverses combined to undermine confidence in the rebel leadership and to lower guerrilla morale.

Although the guerrillas apparently had sufficient quantities of ammunition and arms, they suffered from an inadequate distribution system. The active Greek guerrilla had to make do on less than 5 pounds of supplies per day, in contrast to the U.S. soldier's 37 pounds;³³ moreover, it was seldom possible to get even that 5 pounds to him. Logistical operations were conducted from the Grammos-Vitsi area, where most of the guerrillas were concentrated. The Pindus mountain range linked this major base with units whose operations took them as far south as the Gulf of Corinth. Lacking aircraft, the guerrillas found it almost impossible to sustain operations any distance from the Grammos region. As the guerrillas were forced back upon their Grammos-Vitsi base, their communications and logistics problems eased, but their ability to survive became totally dependent upon external support.

Greek Guerrillas Founder on Macedonian Question

The political crisis the insurgents faced stemmed from a problem that had long agitated the Balkan states, the so-called Macedonian question. Its reappearance created a rift in the Communist bloc and divided the leadership and membership of the KKE. As early as 1946, Yugoslavia's Tito had discussed with Bulgarian and Russian leaders the formation of a Balkan confederation. Tito's initial scheme was unacceptable to the Bulgarians, however, for he had proposed that each of his nation's six constituent "republics" have a voice equal to that of all Bulgaria. Tito, moreover, proposed that all of Macedonia—including Yugoslav, Greek, and Bulgarian parts—should form an independent state within the confederation. In contrast, Georgei

Dimitrov, Bulgaria's dictator, voiced his nation's traditional longing to annex Greek Thrace and eastern Macedonia. Although Tito and Dimitrov agreed to lower customs barriers between their two nations, at the time they were unable to make any progress toward deciding the future status of Macedonia.

Then, in August 1947, Tito and Dimitrov met at Bled, Yugoslavia, and concluded an agreement. In Greece, it was believed that the two heads of state had agreed that at the successful conclusion of the insurgency, Greek Macedonia would be incorporated into Yugoslav Macedonia, Greek Thrace would be made a part of Bulgaria, and a South Slav federation would be formed uniting Yugoslavia and Bulgaria. Whatever the actual agreement, there was apparently some grain of truth in the Greek version. In Moscow, Pravda denounced the idea, and Dimitrov immediately washed his hands of the suggested confederation.

Tito now began cultivating support among the Greek Communists, particularly Markos, and offered increased material assistance in return for an opportunity to organize the Slavic-speaking minority in Greek Macedonia into a political entity. The Greek Communists permitted Greek Slavophones to organize and gave them representation in the "Provisional Democratic Government of Free Greece" (PDKEE). In January 1948, the National Liberation Front (NOF) of the Greek Slavo-Macedonians was reactivated. The first NOF Congress was held on the 13th, to salute a "people who have been suppressed, tortured, and exterminated for many years by capitalist regimes, the organs of big imperialists." Two ranking Greek Communists, Ioannides and Stringos, attended on behalf of Markos. Ioannides stressed the importance of "the history of the Slavo-Macedonian people's struggles for the fulfillment of their desires . . .," and promised that "the liberation of Greece . . . will be the liberation of the Slavo-Macedonians."³⁴

Moscow, however, reacted to Tito's empire-building by forcing the Yugoslav leader out of the Cominform. The Soviet break with Tito on June 28, 1948, immediately triggered a struggle within the Greek Communist Party between the Titoists led by Markos and the Stalinists led by Zachariades, the Moscow-trained Secretary General of the KKE. In their zeal to frustrate Tito's designs, the pro-Soviet Greek Communists ignored for the moment Bulgaria's ambitions to control this same region of Greece.

By October 1948, Bulgaria began to press the KKE for recognition of Bulgarian claims in Greek Macedonia. At a joint meeting of the KKE and the Bulgarian Communist Party, the KKE representative, Tasos Petrides, reportedly agreed to accord minority rights and eventual self-determination for the Slavophone minority in Greece. He proposed to refer the question to the Cominform, but the matter may have been resolved at the Fifth Congress of the Bulgarian Communist Party, which was attended by Zachariades, Ioannides, and Vlandas of the KKE Politburo. In mid-November, two ranking Greek Communists went to Sofia for exploratory discussions with the Bulgarians.³⁵ In January 1949, the pro-Tito Markos was replaced as prime minister of the rebel government by Mitsos Partsalides, who was more acceptable to the Greek Slavophones and the Bulgarians. The Greek Titoists were beaten.

Tito Closes Border

The Greek Communist leadership's policy of strengthening its ties with the Dimitrov regime dismayed the pro-Tito Slavo-Macedonians, many of whom were serving in the KKE guerrilla forces. His plans thwarted and the insurgency weakening, Tito retaliated on July 10, 1949, by announcing the closing of the border with Greece and the end of aid to the Greek guerrillas. One month later, the war entered its final phase as the Greek army attacked Vitsi. After the fall of this redoubt, Grammos was overwhelmed, and organized resistance came to an end.³⁶

Thus ended the third round of the Communist insurgency in Greece. From the outset, success had depended upon foreign support, for the Greek Communists lacked the internal resources to overthrow the legitimate government. But this vital aid had proved self-defeating, since both the Yugoslavs and the Bulgarians had such obvious designs on Greek territory that almost all Greeks except the most dedicated Communists feared for their nation's territorial integrity.

COUNTERINSURGENCY

The strength of Greek reaction against the Communists at the end of World War II had been evidenced in the fall of 1946 by the plebiscite that returned King George II. The government, however, was unable to take advantage of this popular sentiment because it lacked security forces trained to deal with the increasing infiltration of guerrilla bands along Greece's northern borders. Moreover, the security measures taken by the conservatives who controlled the government disenchanted the non-Communist liberal opposition. A year passed before the right and center reconciled their differences on national policy in September 1947 and were thus able to form a common front against the guerrilla movement, which by then was in full swing.

Although the Greeks had recognized the gravity of the Communist threat during the first and second rounds of the insurgency from 1942 to 1945, the country was unprepared for guerrilla activity of the type which began in 1946. According to Field Marshal Alexandros Papagos, who gave the final blow to the Communist forces in 1949, the national forces and the internal security agencies were "unprepared" to deal with the guerrillas.³⁷ Other Greek sources charged that the British Military Mission which had advised the Greek armed forces had failed to recognize the guerrillas as Communist insurgents and had refused to abandon conventional training in order to prepare for mountain operations.³⁸

The Greek government had to augment both its conventional and paramilitary forces in order to do battle with the insurgents. As guerrilla strength became more apparent, the Greek government and the American and British *military* advisers became concerned with raising, training, and putting in the field larger, better trained, and better equipped forces. A related problem was the recruitment and supply of paramilitary organizations such as the civil guard, gendarmery, and city police, and the coordination of their operations with those of the regular establishment.³⁹

Strength and Organization of Greek Land Forces

Greek regular forces comprised the contingents that survived World War II. When Greece was liberated in 1944, these consisted of a 2,000-man brigade from the Middle East and an elite group of 600 to 800 officers—the "Sacred Squadron"—that had seen action in Italy. The British Military Mission promptly undertook to train and equip a regular army of 100,000 men, to be ready for field operations by 1948. Guerrilla pressure, however, caused this goal to be increased to 120,000, which was to be attained by shortening the training period. With the aid of American training cadres, the revised objective was surpassed, for in the final phase of the insurgency the Greek National Army (GNA) numbered about 150,000.⁴⁰

The combat arms of the GNA were infantry, artillery, armored reconnaissance, commandos, tanks, and combat engineers. Supporting arms, controlled by the appropriate directorates of the army general staff, were attached as necessary to the various corps or divisions. A typical infantry division might consist of infantry, headquarters, signal elements, and a battery of 75mm pack howitzers. By the spring of 1948 the army had eight such divisions, each numbering about 9,300 men. Usually, a mountain division was reinforced by a cavalry squadron, a machinegun company, engineers, and a regiment of mountain artillery. Field divisions, with armored cavalry and field artillery, were organized for service on the plains of Greece. By 1949 there were three field and four mountain divisions.⁴¹

Armored cavalry and tanks were inappropriate for mountain fighting, but they had a psychological effect on the townspeople living in the plains. The commando units, four 635-man groups of five companies each, were more effective. Their offensive spirit, expressed in daring exploits involving the penetration of enemy lines to conduct raids deep in hostile territory, inspired confidence among government forces and among the loyal civilian populace.⁴²

Air and Naval Forces

Without direct air support, it is doubtful that Greek ground forces could have achieved their eventual effectiveness, but despite its importance the air arm grew slowly. Initially, the United Kingdom lacked the financial resources to meet the need for tactical airpower, but the United States later succeeded in strengthening the air force, which, it turned out, accounted for less than one-tenth the total cost of military aid. In 1947 the Royal Hellenic Air Force (RHAF) had about 5,000 officers and men, of whom 400 were flight personnel; American aid enabled the government to increase this force to 7,500. The aerial operations by means of which the RHAF attempted to isolate the battlefield proved fruitless, since almost all of Greece was a battlefield. Air action did, however, restrict guerrilla movement by daylight and was effective in directly supporting ground troops as well as in harassing enemy concentrations. The most serious problems were shortages of pilots and suitable aircraft and difficulties in identifying targets.⁴³

The role of the Royal Hellenic Navy (RHIN), the third of the nation's regular forces, was not dramatic, but it was important, since it involved protection of a coastline totaling some 2,000 miles. The navy's strength remained practically constant, averaging about 14,000 men. Its craft patrolled the mainland coast as well as the islands of the Aegean and Adriatic Seas. The navy maintained this patrol to prevent the escape of guerrillas held in island prison camps, to intercept reinforcements for guerrilla units operating well south of the Grammos-Vitsi region, and to transport government troops and supplies in areas where land communications were poor. The navy's job was generally defensive, but often it had to pursue guerrilla caiques and sometimes it landed sailors to gather intelligence or conduct raids in support of land operations.⁴⁴

The Paramilitary Organizations

The regular military establishment also received the cooperation of several paramilitary organizations, among them the gendarmery. At the same time that the army was being trained and reorganized, a new gendarmery had to be created, since the prewar security organizations had been accused of collaborating with the German occupation forces. From 20,000 men in 1947, the gendarmery was increased to 35,000, only to be reduced to 25,000 by July 1949. During the fighting, the gendarmery was under the command of the army, which had assumed responsibility for maintaining order throughout the country. Gendarmery units, each made up of two or three squads, were issued Bren and Sten guns, British-made two-inch mortars, and radios. Thus equipped, the gendarmes played an important role in patrolling restricted areas around secured towns and villages.⁴⁵

Assisting the soldiers and gendarmes were two organizations composed of volunteer "minutemen." These were the Units of Rural Security (Monádes Asphaliás Ypaíthrou, or MAY) and the Units of Pursuit Detachments (Monádes Apospasmáton Dióxeos, or MAD), organized in October 1946 to protect the rural populace from guerrilla harassment. Because of political controversy over their activities, these two organizations were disbanded in November 1947 after the formation of a liberal-conservative coalition government to prosecute the war.⁴⁶

The successors to these early "minutemen" were some 50,000 armed civilians who performed static defense missions as members of the National Defense Corps (Tágmata Ethnikís Asphaliás, or TEA). TEA was founded on December 31, 1947, and by May of the following year some 97 battalions were in existence. The creation of TEA, which was under army control, increased the flexibility of the Greek counterinsurgency forces by releasing for offensive action gendarmery and army units that otherwise would have been immobilized defending hamlets.⁴⁷

Comparative Strength and Effectiveness of Government and Guerrilla Forces

Greek counterinsurgency forces, regular and paramilitary, possessed a balance that resulted in effectiveness. To maintain this equilibrium, the American Mission for Aid to Greece

resisted Greek pressure to increase the armed forces beyond what it thought necessary.⁴⁸ At their maximum strength, the national forces, including gendarmes and others under army control, fluctuated between 230,000 and 250,000; they opposed a maximum of 28,000 active guerrillas—a ratio of roughly nine to one. This numerical disparity was no true indication of comparative prowess or strength. Rather, it was the result of the logistic and administrative requirements and civilian responsibilities of the army, and it did not take into account the unseen insurgents of the Communist underground.

Besides striking a numerical balance with respect to the task they faced, the counterinsurgency forces achieved a balance among the combat arms and supporting services that was in sharp contrast to the guerrillas, who remained almost exclusively infantry. The army developed, thanks to this internal balance, strategic mobility and tactical staying power which were decided advantages when the guerrillas began employing larger formations in southern and central Greece as well as in the north where they were trying to defend their bases of operation. In the judgment of one American military observer, the Greek guerrillas "had at no time the capability of directly opposing the army."⁴⁹ He found it difficult to understand why the guerrillas allowed themselves to be forced into a position where they had to oppose balanced military forces with infantry alone, when they could have launched sudden thrusts from their mountain strongholds and in that way kept government forces off balance.

External Aid to the Greek Government

The presence throughout the insurgency of United Nations observers along the northern borders of Greece inhibited Soviet-bloc aid to the guerrillas. The Security Council's Commission of Investigation, formed in December 1946, and the General Assembly's Special Committee on the Balkans (UNSCOB), created in September 1947, assured international interest in the Greek government's efforts to stem Communist aggression.⁵⁰

Furthermore, direct external aid to the Greek government was decisive in subduing the Communist insurgency. Equipment supplied by the British was deteriorating by the end of 1947, but the shortcomings in both armament and training were rectified once American aid started pouring in. The army and air force were substantially re-equipped by the United States. American aid made up about one-quarter of the national income of Greece during the two crucial years of the guerrilla war; it amounted to \$819 million, of which \$473 million was economic aid and \$345 million for military purposes.⁵¹

The demarcation between U.S. economic aid and military assistance was often indistinct. Many construction projects and other activities funded under the American economic program directly benefited the military operations. Included in this category were such activities as road building, harbor development, and airport construction. Among the undertakings that were predominantly economic, the major problem was the distribution of consumer goods in rural

areas, where agricultural production had declined to less than 75 percent of the prewar level. Increasing agricultural yields heralded the easing of this problem by the end of 1948 and encouraged rural Greeks to defy the guerrilla threat. In retrospect, American aid may be said to have prepared the way for reconstruction of the nation.

Improvements in armament, a vital aspect of the military advisory and assistance effort, were gradual and, in the words of one American adviser, "did not hit their full stride until after hostilities were over."⁵² Nonetheless, the introduction in the spring of 1948 of 60mm and 81mm mortars and 75mm pack howitzers—as well as the equipping of each division with a four-gun howitzer battery—had decisive military value. The light M1919A4 machinegun, which replaced the Browning automatic rifle just before the final government offensive, was tactically valuable and also increased the confidence of the national forces in the success of their attack on Grammos-Vitsi. No less effective in the hands of Greek troops were the 2.36-inch rocket launcher and the 75mm recoilless rifle, both introduced by the Americans. The recoilless weapon appeared in July 1949, a month before the insurgency collapsed. These weapons gave Greek national forces a striking power which the guerrillas, declining in both numbers and morale, could not repel without lavish material aid and foreign volunteers.

The U.S. Mission: Strength, Organization, and Effectiveness

The American Mission for Aid to Greece (AMAG) was established on July 15, 1947, under the direction of Dwight P. Griswold, former Governor of Nebraska. The initial complement was 206 Americans, of whom 78 were members of the armed forces. By August 1949 the two assistance programs were administered by about 1,000 Americans, of whom some 600 were military men, 220 were in the economic mission, 100 were in the American Embassy, and 80 were attached to the Joint Administrative Services (JAS).⁵³ Gen. James A. Van Fleet took command of the Joint United States Military Advisory and Planning Group (JUSMAPG) on February 24, 1948. This military mission remained within the framework of AMAG until June 1948, when it was placed under the direction of Ambassador Henry F. Grady. As chief of AMAG, the Ambassador coordinated economic and military aid with the political aspects of the program.

JUSMAPG assumed the principal responsibility for giving organizational and tactical advice to the Greek government. The British Military Mission also remained active, thus preserving the continuity of military assistance to Greece. Cooperation between the two missions continued until the end of the insurgency. The British and American advisers, acting cooperatively, were able to bring deficiencies, down to the division level, to the attention of the Greek commander in chief. Once apprised of the army's failings, the commander in chief could weigh the Anglo-American advice against the peculiar demands of operations in Greece.⁵⁴

Early Military Measures Are Inhibited by Inadequate Training and Intelligence

Early government counterinsurgency efforts were desultory and devoid of results. Prior to 1947 the guerrillas were viewed as an internal security problem and dealt with as such. But the police, gendarmes, and volunteer minutemen proved inadequate; for the guerrilla movement, although it resembled an indigenous insurgency, had strong external support. On July 26, 1946, the government called upon the army, then being reorganized and trained, to assume responsibility for suppressing the guerrillas.⁵⁶ The army, however, was not ready to undertake systematic counterinsurgency operations, and the campaign did not actually begin until March 1947.⁵⁶

During the early clearing operations, intelligence was inadequate. Government forces were unable to ferret out elements of the Communist underground, and they could obtain only scant information about the location of guerrilla field units. Nor did the government attempt to cultivate the support of the people; this failure could have been caused by the collapse of administrative agencies during the Axis occupation.⁵⁷ Both military intelligence and administrative services began improving early in 1948.

Programs To Induce Surrender

Of particular note was AMAG's information program, which supplemented the psychological and informational activities being undertaken by the Greeks. The government also offered amnesty to guerrillas willing to surrender, and these offers had a depressing effect upon insurgent morale, particularly after the government had made military gains. The first amnesty act was passed by the Greek Parliament on February 25, 1947. Although this amnesty was extended beyond the original March 15 deadline, the results were meager. A second amnesty offer on September 16, 1947, under the national coalition government of Themistocles Sophoulis, was more effective: within three months almost 4,000 guerrillas surrendered.⁵⁸

The Antiguerrilla Battles of Spring 1948 Reveal Government Weaknesses

An antiguerrilla offensive was begun on April 15, 1948, when the government attempted to surround and annihilate the guerrilla concentrations in northern and central Greece. The two principal operations, DAWN and CROWN, were directed against hostile concentrations near Rumeli, in central Greece, and in Grammos, near the northern border. Of the 2,000 guerrillas believed massed near Rumeli DAWN forces of three divisions killed 641 and captured 1,300 at a cost to themselves of 145 killed. In CROWN, six divisions organized as a corps attacked near Grammos, encountering some 15,000 guerrillas, including those who engaged in diversionary attacks behind government lines. National forces killed about 2,500 of the enemy and captured 1,000, but lost 801 killed and suffered another 5,000 wounded.⁵⁹

Operation CROWN, the first effort to capture Grammos, the main guerrilla base, was the more important of the two operations. Here the Greek ground forces fought well, and the air force flew some 2,400 offensive sorties, 750 reconnaissance flights, and 180 supply missions. Despite these accomplishments and the severe enemy losses, the government was unable to destroy the guerrilla force. The bulk of the insurgents withdrew into Albania. The United Nations notified Yugoslavia and Bulgaria, as well as Albania, that the retreating guerrillas were to be disarmed and interned. This was not done, however; the Communist forces retained their weapons, received supplies, and returned to Greece, where they established strongholds between the border towns of Florina and Konitsa.⁶⁰

Widespread clearing operations such as the spring campaign of 1948 took place first in the mountain areas of central Greece and then in Macedonia and Thrace. The Greek general staff believed that these offensive actions were well planned and well executed, but they failed to secure areas ostensibly cleared by encirclement tactics. This failure was due to a shortage of men and materials which, in combination with poor intelligence, permitted the guerrillas to escape by exfiltrating through government lines at night.

The Government Gains Both Military and Political Strength

The frustrating struggle for control of the Grammos region, which took place a year before the final defeat of the Communists, illustrated the difficulties of waging war in a country whose mountains form avenues for infiltration from bordering countries. This battle revealed the need for increasing the strength and improving the equipment of the Greek forces. The army was promptly increased from 132,000 to 145,000 men, the air force from 6,500 to 7,500, and the navy from 13,500 to 14,300. Peak strength of the armed forces, excluding security forces and TEA, was about 169,000.⁶¹

In October 1948, when Prime Minister Sophoulis appointed Gen. Alexandros Papagos, retired hero of the 1940-41 war with Italy, supreme commander of the land forces, national morale rose perceptibly. This dramatic gesture reassured the country, aroused its spirit of national unity, and marked the end of political interference in purely military affairs. Papagos, given the title of Field Marshal, demanded and received broad powers over the organization of the army—and a never-to-be-fulfilled promise that its strength would be increased to 250,000 men—as well as similar power over the formulation of military policy and the conduct of operations.⁶²

Papagos' appointment coincided with the fruition of American military and economic aid. A few months earlier, Tito had been expelled from the Cominform, and doubts began arising among those guerrillas who catered to the Yugoslav leader. Greek nationalists, moreover, were becoming increasingly aware of the Slav threat to the territorial integrity of Greece, with Macedonia and western Thrace at stake. These factors combined to enhance the prospects that a new government offensive, scheduled for the fall of 1948, would end in victory.

Government Forces Overrun Main Guerrilla Base

Government strategy in this autumn offensive called for clearing operations that would begin in the south and move northward, thus driving the guerrillas back upon their principal base, located in the Grammos-Vitsi region, where the final blow would be struck. The army now had the ability to secure its lines of communication and to prevent the enemy from infiltrating again into areas already secured. Government forces were mobile and flexible enough to concentrate substantial numbers of troops in almost any part of Greece and to support them logistically. They had thus achieved a staying power that the enemy lacked. Furthermore, the guerrillas, who had once been able to rely on a certain amount of local support, now had to depend largely on Albania and Bulgaria for military assistance and refuge. Yugoslav aid became more and more scarce as Tito lost influence with the Greek Communist leadership, and in July 1948, a month before the insurrection was crushed, Yugoslavia sealed the border with Greece.

The last stage of the Grammos-Vitsi offensive, fought near the juncture of the Albanian and Yugoslav frontiers, was known by the code name of TORCH. It began on August 10, 1949, with a powerful government air attack on Vitsi. In six days Grammos was struck with 826 sorties. Here the air force displayed its full potential in support of ground operations, and the strikes enabled the army to overrun the area with comparatively few casualties.

Caught in the Grammos-Vitsi region were probably 12,000 of the estimated 20,000 guerrillas still active in Greece. Attacking army units effectively combined night operations and diversionary operations to keep the guerrillas off balance, and by the end of August the Greek Communists were beaten.⁶³ The war was won, but victory left the Greek nation with heavier physical damage and deeper psychological wounds than it had suffered even as a result of World War II.

A Political Truce and Administrative Reorganization Aid the Government's Effort

Prime Minister Sophoulis, who died on June 24, 1949, two months before the long fight reached its successful conclusion, had become a symbol of the nation's unity of purpose. His coalition government, consisting of traditionally conservative royalists and liberal republicans, had provided since September 1947 a degree of political harmony essential to victory over communism. Conservatives and liberals not only kept a political truce but even broadened the political base of the coalition cabinet in a series of reshuffles. The coalition, however, contained groups with long-standing political differences, and despite their cooperation, both right and center remained suspicious of each other.

Two basic administrative problems limited the efficiency of the government. The first was the reorganization of disrupted administrative agencies, a task that required the purging of unreliable elements dating from the occupation or even, in some cases, from before the war. The second was the high degree of centralization that deprived the rural populace of initiative in

local affairs. The government adopted some corrective measures, but it did not go far enough to create effective public management. Civil servants were always on the verge of striking for higher wages, and unemployment made the government reluctant to abolish existing jobs and thus to reduce an oversized bureaucracy. As a result of joint Greek-American surveys, some governmental reforms were introduced, but the problem of overcentralization, along with the blurring of jurisdictional lines between ministries, defied solution.⁶⁴

Although many Greeks advocated an authoritarian government to counter the insurgency, parliamentary democracy nevertheless survived the ordeal. Public debate, a free press, and an independent judiciary functioned in the traditional Greek way. Labor's freedom, however, was restricted by an antistrike law adopted on December 7, 1947.

Economic and Social Problems

The nation's economy presented a critical problem. The government's principal concerns were to check inflation, bring hoarded capital into the market, instill confidence in the currency, provide opportunities for employment, and counteract the rise in the cost of living by stabilizing the drachma. With AMAG assistance, the government took actions that included tax increases as well as controls over the budget, wages, and credit. An American-supervised Foreign Trade Administration was established, and stringent import and export procedures were instituted.⁶⁵

The principal social problem created by the insurgency-counterinsurgency situation was the displacement of about 700,000 persons—almost 10 percent of the population, mostly in the northern provinces—from their homes and occupations. Among these were the people evacuated from areas where military operations were underway or from villages that had become guerrilla supply points.⁶⁶ Peasants seeking security from guerrilla raids moved to the cities, where they needed work, shelter, food, and medical care. This social dislocation created a heavy drain on the economy. At the same time, the abduction of children by the Communists for "protection and education" was both a social and a political problem. The number of abducted children was estimated as high as 30,000, and their distraught parents understandably tended to blame the government for inadequate protection.

The counterinsurgency effort in Greece required a degree of political solidarity and economic strength that was lacking when the Communists initiated their postwar attempt to dominate the country. Assured of substantial aid from Communist-bloc countries and aware of the chaos within Greece, the Communists attempted to turn economic and political conditions to their advantage, but miscalculated the likelihood and potential effectiveness of U.S. aid. The government, with assistance from abroad, succeeded in shoring up the economy, maintaining both political cooperation and parliamentary procedures, and eliminating the Communist aggressors.

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

Neither a Communist proposal to enter negotiations, made on September 10, 1947, nor peace feelers put forth on January 25, 1948, had any noticeable effect on the government's resolve. Athens, moreover, declined even to examine a settlement proposed by the U.S.S.R. to the United States and the United Kingdom on May 20, 1949, during a United Nations session at Lake Success, New York.

Communist Forces Withdraw

The Communist insurgents withdrew from Greek soil in August 1949 without admitting defeat. On October 9 of that year the KKE described the retreat as a "tactical withdrawal."⁶⁷ Later, on October 16, it declared that the "Democratic Army" yielded before "the enemy's tremendous material superiority and before Tito's treasonable attack in its rear."⁶⁸ Actually, the KKE had admitted earlier (in January 1949 at its Fifth Plenum) that the party "was unable to solve the basic problem of the Democratic Army's reserves or the supply of its units in Central and Southern Greece, unable to master the situation which monarcho-fascism had created in the towns, unable to ensure new forces for the Democratic Army and combine a powerful mass movement in the towns with the guerrilla forces in the mountains."⁶⁹ In short, the KKE admitted that it had failed to transform the guerrilla war into a civil war based on internal support and resources.

About 18,000 to 20,000 guerrillas withdrew from Greece and joined a reserve force of about 10,000 effective and about 20,000 noneffective guerrillas deployed in Albania, Yugoslavia, and Bulgaria. Although the guerrillas were scattered, the KKE still possessed a strength estimated at about 30,000 men and women. In addition, some 30,000 Greek youths who had been forcibly carried out of Greece would constitute a reserve of manpower as they came of age.⁷⁰ Thus an implied Communist threat against the security of Greece remains, and has been a consideration in Greek defense planning.

Reasons for the Government's Victory

A combination of factors contributed to the defeat of the guerrillas, among which two prime reasons were the Greek will to fight and massive American assistance. The presence of British troops in Greece had had a restraining influence upon any direct intervention by Soviet-bloc countries, but American military aid enabled Greece to mobilize, equip, and train effective armed forces in the course of a year and a half. The Tito-Cominform rift in June 1948, which led Belgrade a year later to close its frontier with Greece, had a weakening effect on the guerrilla operations.

The KKE's military failure has often been attributed to the closing of the Yugoslav frontier and the consequent loss of its principal external sanctuary and support base. Although the

guerrillas could have continued to receive logistic and other support from Albania and Bulgaria. Tito must have suspected, even in mid-1948, that the Greek guerrillas were doomed to failure, in view of massive U.S. aid and the growing strength of the Greek national forces. It seems doubtful that Tito would have defied the Cominform had the pro-Stalinist Communists in Greece given promise of dominating the southern flanks of Yugoslavia.

Post-Insurgency Trends

August 29, 1949, is celebrated by the Greeks as the day of victory over communism: it has also been observed as a day signifying the beginning of the long-delayed postwar reconstruction. A reconstruction plan was initiated in June 1948 by the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA) under the Marshall Plan.⁷¹ Invoking an austerity program, the Greek government was able to lay the foundations of economic stability and development through fiscal and tax reforms.

At the same time the defeat of communism lessened Greek fears sufficiently to permit a political swing to the center, which allowed for social, political, and economic reforms. The elections of 1950 and 1951 revealed a trend away from political polarization between left and right, although this tendency was arrested by the failure of the center to consolidate its political forces. The basic problem of Greece remained: the task of obtaining from an eroded soil and meager natural resources a decent standard of living for its population.⁷²

The international consequences of the Communist defeat in Greece were incalculable. To quote from what has come to be known as the Truman doctrine, the fall of Greece to the Communists would have had an "immediate and serious" effect on Turkey, and "confusion and disorder might well [have] spread throughout the entire Middle East." The president had further feared that "the disappearance of Greece as an independent state would have a profound effect upon those countries in Europe whose peoples are struggling against great difficulties to maintain their freedoms and independence while they repair the damages of war." Fortunately, these grim possibilities had been avoided, and the Greek government's final victory showed that a nation could both overcome a Communist insurgency and maintain its freedom and liberty.

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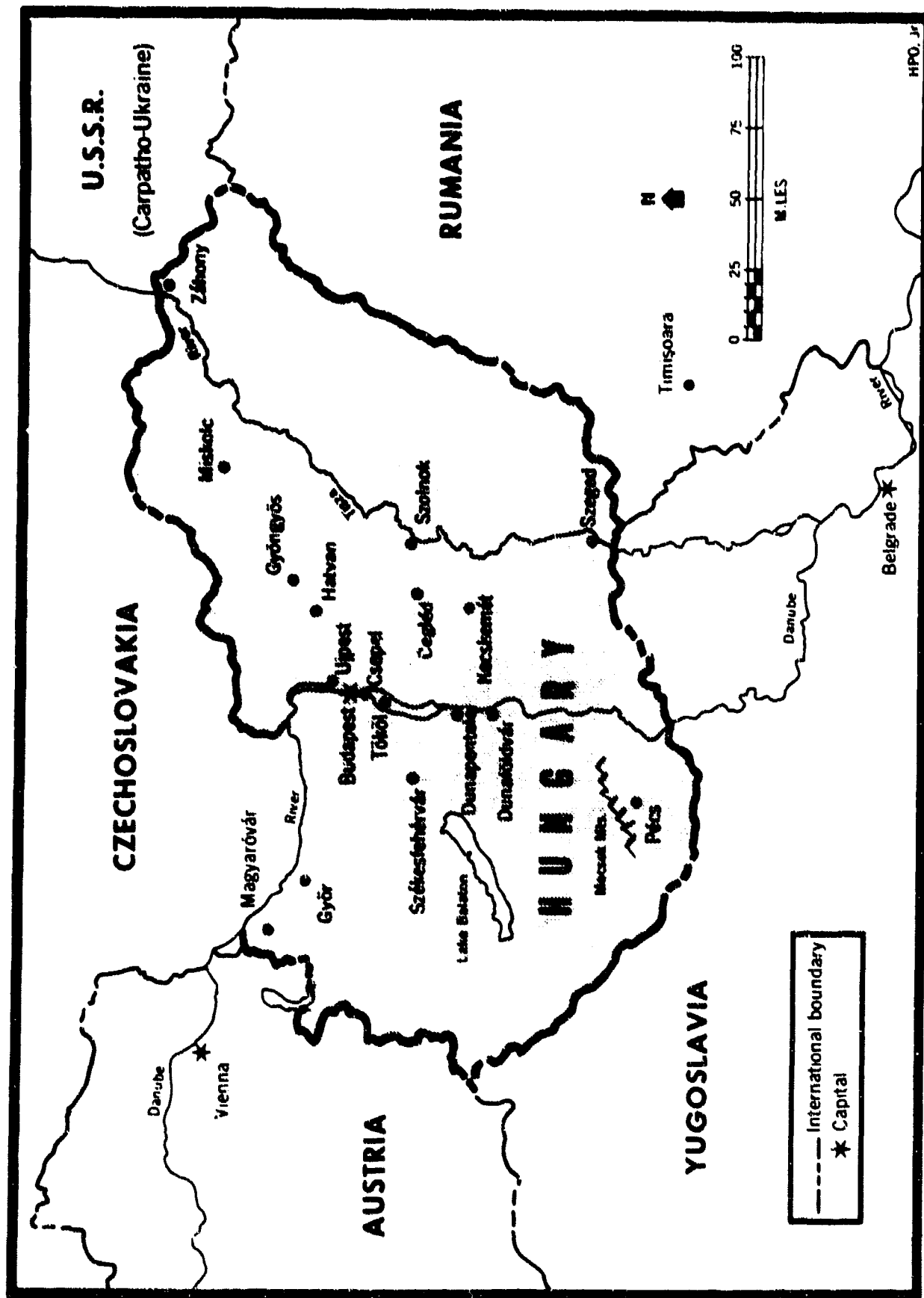
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Chapter Eighteen

HUNGARY
October-November 1956

by Leonard Bushkoff



HUNGARY (1956)

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When an armed rebellion originally aimed at achieving de-Stalinization in Hungary brought to power a liberal Communist government which was then forced by continuing pressure from the people to institute measures leading, in effect, to the end of Communist power, the Soviet Union moved in and crushed the insurrection with overwhelming force.

BACKGROUND

Hungary's political history has been deeply influenced by her geographical position in Eastern Europe, where she has traditionally been faced by the power of Germany on the west and of Russia on the east. As part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1914, Hungary joined with Germany in World War I and suffered a series of disasters in 1918-20. Defeated in war, the Austro-Hungarian Empire disintegrated; and, although Hungary became independent, much of her territory went to the new states established on her frontiers—Austria, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and Rumania. In Hungary, the old order was shaken to its very roots, and in March 1919 the country slid into a disorderly and incompetent Communist dictatorship under Béla Kun. This was overthrown in July, and some Hungarian Communists fled to the Soviet Union, not to return until the end of World War II.¹ The new government—a conservative oligarchy operating under the regency of Adm. Miklós Horthy—made no essential changes in Hungary's semifeudal order before its demise in 1944.

During the interwar period, Hungarian political life had little place for either the peasants, many of whom lived on the great estates in conditions approximating serfdom, or the growing working class of Budapest. Political, social, and economic power was divided among the traditional landed aristocracy, the bureaucrats, and a developing business class. Conditions were ripe for far-reaching changes; and these came at the end of World War II, when Hungary, which had joined Nazi Germany in 1941, again paid the price of defeat. Soviet troops arrived in 1944. The Soviet Union, furthermore, acquired a common border with Hungary. Internally, the old order was completely destroyed and a new era began.²

The liberal, Socialist, and Communist elements which came to the fore in Hungary in December 1944 in a four-party coalition government found themselves at the helm of a country

slightly smaller than the state of Indiana, with a population of just over 9 million. Hungary was then primarily an agricultural country, raising wheat, corn, and beef cattle on the dry, flat plains east of the Danube, and more diversified crops in the rolling hill country to the west. There was considerable industry in a few provincial towns and, above all, in the suburbs of Budapest, a dual city separated by the Danube River, with Buda on the western bank and Pest on the eastern side. Budapest was not only the political capital, but the administrative, intellectual, and transportation hub of the country; it contained nearly 20 percent (1,775,000) of the entire population by the time of the revolution in 1956.

Communists Gain Control of Postwar Coalition Government

The story of the Hungarian revolution has its roots in the postwar rise to power of a totalitarian system, which in Hungary was personified by Mátyás Rákosi. A firm Communist who combined intelligence and a superficial charm with opportunism and cruelty, Rákosi returned from Russia with the Soviet occupation forces to head the Hungarian Communist Party as it joined in the new four-party coalition government. The reforms enacted by this government were welcomed by most Hungarians, but it became clear by mid-1946 that the basic issue was not reform but power. In this realm, Rákosi and the Communists, fully supported by the Soviet occupation forces, used the strength gained from cohesiveness, discipline, ruthlessness, skill at exploiting their opponents' weaknesses, and contempt for the niceties of parliamentary conduct, to gain a clear advantage over their three partners in the government. During 1947-48, Rákosi used his control of the Hungarian secret police (the AVO), the army, and the denazification courts, plus the undeniable appeal which the Communists' plans for Hungary's future had for some of the population, to divide, isolate, and finally annihilate the non-Communist parties.³

But although the Communists had gained control of Hungary by the end of 1948, in building their power they had acquired many adherents (almost a million members) whose concept of communism differed fundamentally from the rigid, fanatical, and totalitarian views of the party leaders. Moreover, the party leadership included two divergent groups: the Russian-trained "Muscovites," who were headed by Mátyás Rákosi and his three lieutenants, Ernő Gerő, József Révai, and Mihály Farkas; and the younger "home" Communists, composed of men who had entered the party in the 1930's and early 1940's and had little first-hand experience in Moscow and whose chief leaders were László Rajk and János Kádár. The differences between the Muscovites and the home Communists led to an explosion in 1949, when a storm blew up in Eastern Europe as a result of the successful break of Yugoslavia under Tito with the Soviet regime of Josef Stalin. The order went out to the satellite governments to rid themselves of all Titoist elements. Those Communists who, like Tito, had reached the heights through their leadership of the anti-Nazi resistance rather than through decisions made by Moscow, were now prime suspects.

Rákosi Imposes a Reign of Terror

In Hungary, Rákosi cracked down with a reign of terror that swept everyone in its wake. The principal Communist victim was the Foreign Minister, László Rajk, who was hanged; other home Communists were arrested wholesale. Half the members of the Central Committee of the Communist party were removed, and many were imprisoned.⁴ Virtually the entire high command of the newly Russified Hungarian army was arrested. Social Democrats, intellectuals, members of the middle class, aristocrats, and malingering workers—all felt Rákosi's heavy hand. Nearly 30,000 members of Budapest's bourgeoisie were deported to remote villages.

Rákosi's key instrument was the AVO. It arrested on whim, tortured indiscriminately, and rapidly became one of the most feared and hated secret police organizations in Eastern Europe. Perjured testimony by a malicious neighbor could send an innocent victim to torture or years of deprivation in prison or labor camp. When the purge slackened off in the middle of 1951, an estimated 200,000 Hungarians had been imprisoned or deported. Two thousand had been executed.⁵

With the help of the AVO, Rákosi consolidated his grip on every aspect of the country's life in a drive for "Socialist construction." Communist dogma permeated the schoolroom. Tight controls curbed the Roman Catholic Church, to which 66 percent of Hungarians belonged. Farm collectivization and the nationalization of private business moved rapidly forward. A program of industrial development was projected on a scale far beyond Hungary's capacity to perform; and the urban and working class population was greatly increased. Meanwhile, escape from the country was rendered almost impossible: borders were sealed and foreign travel forbidden.⁶

By 1953, after five years of Rákosi and his minions, the Hungarian people—including many of its million Communist party members—violently hated the man and his government. But the crucial issue is why and how this hatred became overt, first politically and then militarily. Although it might be argued that the desire of the Hungarian people for freedom and national independence was too great to be checked indefinitely, it would be more realistic to suggest that the decisive factor in explaining the 1956 revolution was the sharp decline in the morale, cohesiveness, and internal harmony of the Hungarian Communist Party during 1953-56.

Russian Liberalization of Communism Is Brought to Hungary: Nagy Replaces Rákosi

In March 1953, the death of Stalin introduced a period of change, of "decompression," both within the Soviet Union and its satellites. The Soviet Politburo was no longer controlled by one man, one view. Power lay in the hands of a group of men who disagreed with the old Stalinist line and sometimes with each other. Whereas directives from Moscow had once been predictable and consistent the new situation in the Soviet Union seriously complicated the decision-making process in the satellite capitals. With authority diffused and uncertain, the people of

Pilsen, Czechoslovakia, rioted on June 1; those of East Berlin staged serious riots on June 16-17; and strikes and disturbances occurred in various other East European cities.

Fearful lest similar events occur in Hungary, the Politburo took the drastic step, in late June 1953, of "liberalizing" the Hungarian government by ordering Rákosi to retain only his position as First Secretary of the Communist party and to give up the premiership to Imre Nagy, a pragmatic, moderate Communist with considerable insight into the mood of the Hungarian people. Nagy quickly announced, on July 4, 1953, the "New Course," a major program of agricultural, industrial, and legal reforms. Furthermore, following the downfall of the head of the Soviet secret police in July 1953 and the imposition of restraints on that organization, similar changes were effected in Hungary. The AVO was curbed and some of its more brutal members arrested. The fear of taking a misstep, which many of the AVO now began to feel, helped neither their morale nor their efficiency.

Release of Hungarian Prisoners Produces a Crisis of Conscience for Communist Intellectuals

A widely proclaimed element in Nagy's New Course was the end of arbitrary arrests and the release of unjustly sentenced prisoners. Although prison conditions were greatly improved and many politically unimportant inmates were indeed released late in 1953, Rákosi, fearful of the personal consequences when his victims returned, succeeded in blocking any review of the major sentences until autumn 1954. Then, after Soviet intercession, the prisoners slowly began to return to Budapest, where some of the party members among them received new positions, thus laying the groundwork for grassroots opposition to Rákosi.

Even more important repercussions were to come from the fact that many of the ex-prisoners had been writers and journalists, who enjoyed the prestige traditionally granted by Hungarian society to its intelligentsia. During 1948-53, the period of "Socialist construction," many Communist intellectuals had striven hard in their writings to mobilize Hungarian opinion behind the Rákosi government. In so doing, few had shown doubts regarding the truthfulness of the accusations against Rajk and the other purge victims and indeed had often applauded the purges. But, in the autumn of 1954, the freeing of many Communists from prison brought their fellow intellectuals face to face with the ugly truth. The falsity of the charges on which the prisoners had been tried, the brutality with which they had been treated, the intimate view they had acquired of the AVO, all now became common knowledge.⁷

A spiritual crisis resulted, in which bad conscience and guilt feelings combined to produce hatred, then opposition, among Rákosi's once-faithful intellectual backers. Although this opposition group consisted of no more than two or three dozen intellectuals, all of them perfectly faithful to Communist doctrine, the war of words, short stories, poems, essays, and literary manifestoes which they began to wage against Rákosi slowly stirred other politically conscious

groups to action. Some of these disenchanted intellectuals began to support Imre Nagy in late 1954 and continued, even after his subsequent defeat by Rákosi in April 1955, to argue, however cautiously and circumspectly, for reform. Thus first-hand knowledge of the brutality of the system had major repercussions for Communist intellectuals and, eventually, for Communist rule in Hungary.⁸

Rákosi Returns to Power But Meets With Increasing Criticism

In April 1955, the experiment in "liberalization" seemed at an end, as Nagy, beset by economic difficulties and a shift within the Soviet government which left him unsupported, fell from office. Nevertheless, Rákosi's return to power did not signal the rebirth of Stalinism. For one thing, Stalinism in Hungary would have required a monolithic Communist party, whereas the Hungarian party was divided. For another, the Stalinist period in the Soviet Union was a thing of the past. The new head of the Soviet government, Nikita Khrushchev, had personally gone to Belgrade to patch up the feud with Tito, and the significance of this move was not lost on Rákosi.

In the past, Rákosi would undoubtedly have handled the problem of his intellectual opponents with a few well-publicized arrests, but Moscow's new policy of relative liberalization ruled out this course. Even after 59 intellectuals, operating through the Writers' Association, went so far as to present a memorandum in November 1955 condemning the party's "gross encroachments on artistic freedom,"⁹ Rákosi could go no further than expelling two of their leaders from the party. This tangible demonstration that terror, the very essence of Rákosi's power, was no longer feasible did not go unnoticed.

Then, in February 1956, at the Twentieth Congress of the Russian Communist Party in Moscow, Khrushchev, in his famous two-day speech, denounced the "cult of personality" exemplified by Stalin.¹⁰ In Hungary, the attacks on Rákosi now became louder and franker—he was widely referred to as "the bald-headed murderer"—and they spread from the pages of the literary journals to a more popular, and therefore more dangerous, arena: the public meetings held in Budapest by the Petőfi Circle, which had been established under Communist auspices during Nagy's New Course. Encouraged by Khrushchev's speech, the intellectuals continued their barrage and now began to gain the support of the managerial and technical elite, of professional people, bureaucrats, and even of some lesser party officials. Previously all of these groups had been relatively indifferent to what was viewed as no more than a squabble between rival Communist cliques.

A factor in this shift was the economic uncertainty which had gripped Hungary throughout 1955 and continued into 1956, as cutbacks on the expansion of heavy industry raised fears of unemployment, especially for university graduates and young workers just entering the labor force. Although few Hungarians expected justice from the Rákosi regime, the realization that

an avowedly "Socialist" (i.e., Communist) government could not even guarantee full employment was a shock to the ordinary worker and brought back memories of the depression of the 1930's.¹¹

The pressure on Rákosi increased. On March 30, 1956, the Writers' Association soundly defeated the party's candidate for secretary. In April, the long-standing de facto prohibition on travel abroad was virtually abolished. Although few Hungarians had the money to travel, some joined river excursions to Vienna and returned to speak enviously of the personal freedom and higher living standards of the West. In early May, the first steps were taken to do away with the barbed wire, mine fields, and other obstructions along the borders with Yugoslavia and Austria. On May 18, Rákosi publicly acknowledged, presumably at Soviet instruction, his complicity in Rajk's judicial murder.¹²

As Disaffection Spreads, Russians Replace Rákosi With Gerő

Shortly thereafter, the university professors, economists, lawyers, and government officials who composed the Petőfi Circle sponsored a series of meetings in Budapest at which current problems were first discussed and then debated, with the crowds in attendance growing larger, more vociferous, and more conscious of their strength. As news arrived of the workers' riots at Poznan in Poland on June 28-29, Rákosi, already alarmed at the audacity displayed by both the speakers and the audience of over 6,000 at the riotous Petőfi meeting on June 27, hastened to crush the intellectuals.

Some of the party's Central Committee, however, apparently trying to escape from Rákosi's sinking ship, opposed the stiff resolution which he offered on June 30 condemning the Petőfi Circle, and he was unable even to have it dissolved. Rákosi therefore readied his trump card and prepared to have some 400 intellectuals arrested. At this, the party leadership split, and the Russians intervened to force Rákosi to resign. On July 18, he was replaced by Ernő Gerő, and both the government and the party's Politburo were reshuffled.

This change, however, satisfied few Hungarians, since Gerő was widely hated as Rákosi's alter ego; "in place of a bald Rákosi, we got a thin one" became a popular saying in Budapest.¹³ Demands now spread for Imre Nagy's reinstatement in the Communist party (he had been expelled in November 1955), for his participation in a liberalized government, and even for the establishment of Soviet-Hungarian relations "on the basis of the Leninist principle of complete equality."¹⁴

University Students Lead the Continuing Criticism of Gerő's Government

As the school term began in mid-September, the lead in the drive for reform, once belonging to the writers and intellectuals, and later to the Petőfi Circle, now was taken by the

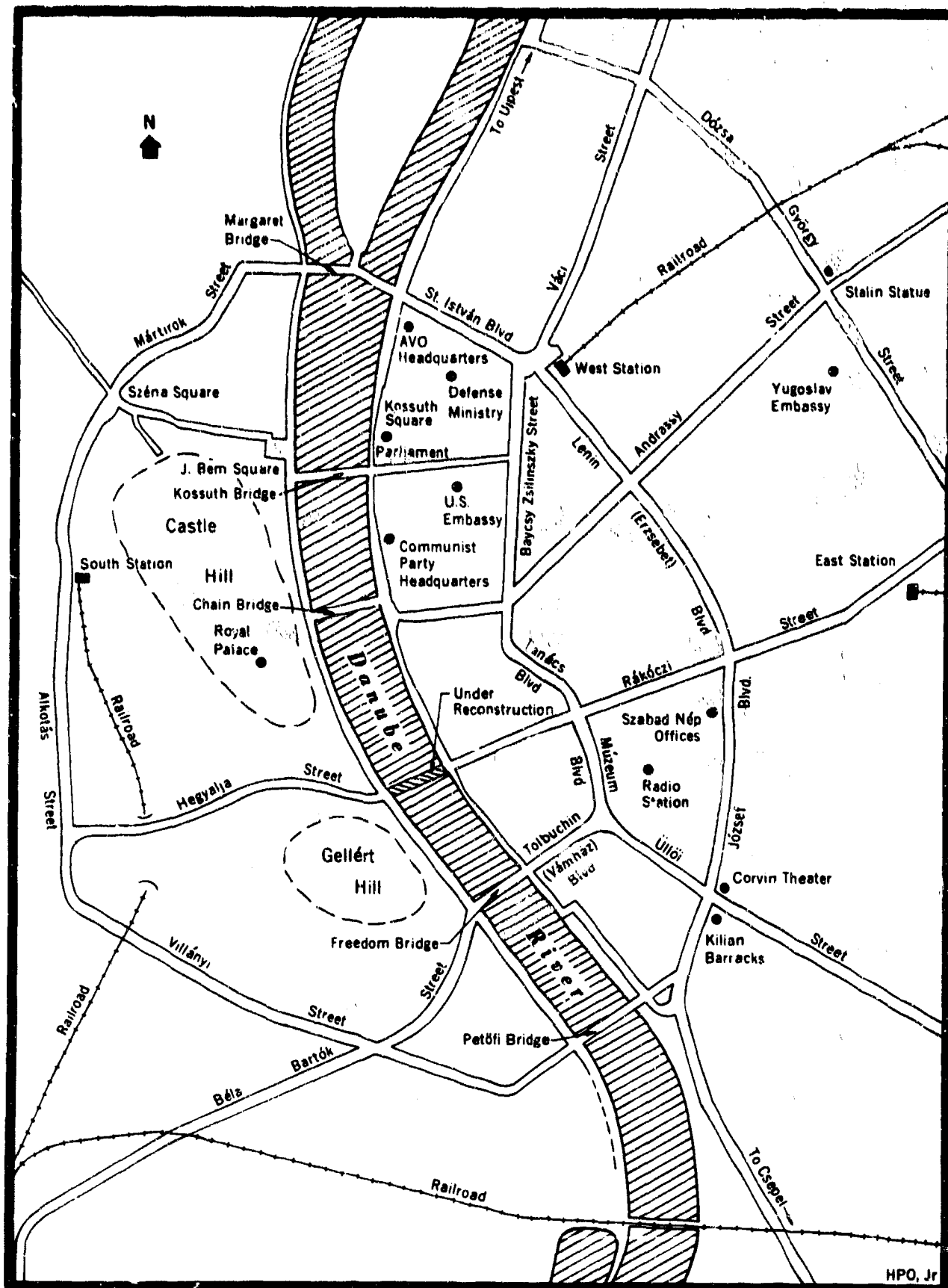
university students. The pressure for the rehabilitation of László Rajk and others of Rákosi's victims could no longer be denied, and the government agreed to the reburial of Rajk on October 6. Some 200,000 citizens of Budapest marched through the streets in this macabre ceremony to listen to speeches calling for reform. On the 14th, Imre Nagy was reinstated in the Communist party. On the 17th, university students presented a list of demands regarding education; the Minister of Education accepted some of these on the 19th and promised to consider others. On the 20th, the university students in Szeged broke with the Communist youth association and formed a new group; their action was widely applauded.¹⁵

By mid-October, Gerő was barely managing to keep his head above water. Events in Poland,¹⁶ where a strong group of moderate Communists and their supporters had been pressing for drastic and far-reaching changes since February, were having an effect in Hungary. The conflict between liberalizing and pro-Soviet groups within the Polish Communist Party reached a climax at the meeting of the Central Committee in Warsaw on October 19-21. Hungarians, traditional friends of the Poles with whom they had shared similar revolutionary experiences in 1848, watched these events attentively. Inspired by news of the developments in Poland, the Budapest University students met to decide how to support the Poles.

Students List Demands and Prepare To Demonstrate

Out of the Budapest meeting came a plan for a public demonstration on October 23 and a listing of reforms needed in Hungary. The 16-point list expressed a desire for freedom from foreign occupation and the hope that Hungary might follow the Polish path toward liberalism within a Marxist framework. Demands included the withdrawal of all Soviet troops from Hungary; reorganization of the Hungarian Communist Party; the replacement of Gerő by Nagy and the purge of all Rákosi supporters; the return of the party system and free elections with a secret ballot; reorganization of foreign and economic relations with Hungary's neighbors; reforms in the norm system for workers and delivery quotas for farmers; the right to strike; freedom of speech; return to the Hungarian national coat of arms, distinctive national uniforms for the Hungarian army, and the reinstatement of the Hungarian national holiday; and, finally, the destruction of the giant memorial statue to Stalin.

By the time the list began to circulate, its aims were widely known. People spoke of nothing else; typists spent the day making copies. According to one observer, the Hungarian people were suddenly welded into unity by this audacious expression of the hopes which they had previously not dared to utter. Meetings in colleges and technical schools throughout the country prepared the way for the demonstration, and the government revealed its irresolution by first benning it and then allowing it to proceed.¹⁷



BUDAPEST (1956)

INSURGENCY

As the students filed through the streets on the afternoon of October 23, they were joined by some 800 officer cadets from the Petöfi Military Academy, by passers-by, and at dusk by workers from offices and factories, until the total reached somewhere between 150,000 and 200,000 persons. The crowd gathered before the Parliament building, eager to hear Ernő Gerő's radio speech in the early evening. The speech was blind, insulting, provocative. Gerő condemned those demanding reform as "chauvinists," "reactionaries," and "enemies of the working class"; he did not simply request, but demanded the fullest support of his government and its policies.¹⁸

The Crowd Takes Action and Seeks Weapons

Gerő's insults led to an explosion among the younger elements in the crowd, who did not wait to hear a conciliatory speech by Imre Nagy, but moved to the 24-foot, bronze statue of Stalin and ripped it down. Still others hurried to the radio station, demanding that their 16-point reform program be broadcast. When the station officials refused, the angered crowd began to stone the building and tried to force open its gate. The secret police guard contingent retaliated with tear gas, but when this proved ineffective, the police opened fire, killing several persons. It was slightly after nine o'clock on the evening of October 23, 1956.

The crowd did not retreat, however, but took cover while some of its members rushed off in search of arms and ammunition. These were obtained with little difficulty at several nearby barracks and police stations. Other rioters hurried to the industrial suburb of Csepel, where they were joined by workers who took the arms of the factory militia and guard detachments. Other workers entered armament works, loaded trucks with small arms, and hurried to Budapest. In no case did these emissaries of the revolution meet any resistance, even from the city police. The news that the secret police, the chief instrument of the Gerő regime, were openly shooting down Hungarians, detonated an explosion of pent-up anger throughout the population.¹⁹

Hungarian Armed Forces Join the Crowd in Protest

Less than an hour after the first shots, a full battalion of Hungarian infantry arrived in trucks from a mechanized division stationed 23 miles away. They were soon backed up by some 20 tanks. It is apparent that these troops must have set out well before the rioting began; some members of the government had obviously anticipated trouble. The units halted just out of sight of the fighting and were quickly surrounded by shouting crowds who told them what had happened. The unit commanders conferred hastily and decided to remain neutral. At this moment, a general officer arrived from the Defense Ministry with orders to take personal command and disperse the crowd. However, the troops ignored his orders and some began to slip their weapons to the crowd.

With many of the troops wavering in their allegiance, an AVO officer ordered a Frontier Guard company to open fire. Instead, the unit broke formation, handed its weapons over to the crowd, and dispersed; the army units followed this example and melted away, while several tanks and their crews joined the rioters. With plenty of small arms and ammunition at their disposal, the insurgents now pressed home their attack on the radio building, which fell to them in the early morning. Other armed insurgents scattered to attack the Communist party's central publishing house, to occupy various public buildings, and to kill or capture every member of the AVO they could find.²⁰

Hungarian Insurgents Face Soviet Forces

The military defections indicated clearly that neither the army nor even the well-paid and well-indoctrinated Frontier Guard would defend the Gerő government; only the AVO could be counted on to do so, and their training and experience as policemen, interrogators, prison wardens, and bullies were of little use in a task requiring seasoned infantrymen.

Shortly before midnight, therefore, Gerő called for intervention by the Soviet troops that had been stationed in Hungary since the end of World War II. The Warsaw Treaty—signed by Hungary, the other satellite countries, and the Soviet Union in May 1955—contained elaborate provisions for mutual cooperation and defense against both external and internal threats by the "enemies of the working class." Soviet armored vehicles therefore reached Budapest before dawn on October 24, forming an unpleasant surprise for its awakening citizens.²¹

Insurgent Weapons and Tactics

On that day took shape the pattern which the fighting was to follow until the cease-fire of October 28. Young workers and students circulated through the city, acquiring more pistols, rifles, submachineguns, and ammunition from the factories of the Csepel and Újpest districts, from the Budapest police (who passively supported the insurgents), from the district offices of the Communist party (which held a few weapons), from the offices of the Hungarian Sports Association, and from army barracks. Except for a very few artillery pieces and antitank guns, the insurgents used no crew-served weapons. Nor had they antitank grenades or antitank rocket launchers; the latter had never been issued to the Hungarian army.²²

Above all, the insurgents collected gasoline, bottles, and ribbon or cotton fabric from which they assembled gasoline bombs on a large scale. While some insurgents fired rifles at tank hatches, driving slits, and periscopes to obscure the vision of its crew, others hurled these homemade bombs from doorways or windows. Rooftops were a preferred position, since from their height it was easier to explode bombs on the horizontal grating covering the engine of the T-34 tank or on the vulnerable exhaust pipes on the tank's stern. Moreover, a rooftop position was unreachable by the T-34's forward machinegun and, usually, by its cannon, which

could rarely be elevated sufficiently to be effective. To get the Soviet tanks to slacken speed or move from the safety of the center of a broad boulevard, the insurgents used various tactics: soup plates or frying pans were laid on the street to simulate land mines; rifles or broomsticks were placed in windows to entice Soviet tanks into dead-end or narrow streets; gasoline-filled dips in the street were set afire as the tank passed; and oil was spread on the steep, cobbled slopes of certain streets, to prevent the tank from gaining traction.²³

Training and Leadership of the Insurgent Groups

These and other techniques of guerrilla warfare had been taught in the paramilitary training courses of high schools and colleges, where young Hungarians had learned of the exploits of Soviet partisan heroes in World War II. The insurgents were largely young men, students and apprentices between the ages of 15 and 25. A few had learned about weapons and tactics as conscripts in the Hungarian army. Some older insurgents had seen combat during World War II. A rough estimate puts the total number of insurgents actively engaged in street fighting in Budapest at about 15,000, including women and teenage boys and girls. The Russian small arms available to all comers were simply constructed and easily understood. Apparently anyone interested in fighting could find the means to do so with little difficulty.²⁴

With certain exceptions, the insurgent groups had no firm direction, command, or coordination, forming and disbanding as seen necessary. Few groups had professional military leadership, although some contained individual soldiers who had left their units in or near Budapest; such "deserters" probably totaled about 2,000. In the absence of any command structure, leadership often fell to older men whose military experience, good sense, and strength of character inspired confidence.²⁵

Operations in Budapest

Perhaps because of their lack of organization and small-unit cohesiveness, the insurgents did not try to exploit the psychological ascendancy they had achieved on the night of the 23d, either by occupying the public buildings they had then attacked or by going on to seize other strategic points in the capital. No attacks were made on the various government ministries or on the twin nerve centers where the top government and Communist party leaders congregated—the Parliament building and the party's national headquarters. The office of the party newspaper, Szabad Nép was, however, the object of a successful attack. The paper did not appear for several days, and its publication thereafter was erratic.

The insurgents' principal effort was devoted to occupying buildings and rooftops surrounding the major intersections, erecting barricades from cars, debris, and cobbles dug up from the streets, and settling down to await attack.²⁶ The major insurgent positions, formed between October 24 and 26, were the Széna (Haymarket) Square in Buda, where some 250 young workers

and students blocked the square with railroad cars pulled over spur tracks from the Southern Railroad Station; Csepel, a huge factory complex on a Danube island just south of Budapest, where some 40,000 workers were employed; the slopes of Castle Hill in Buda, overlooking the government buildings on the opposite bank of the Danube; the Corvin motion picture theater, within the Corvin apartment house complex in a working-class district of Pest; and, most important of all, the Kilián barracks, a thick-walled 200-year-old building close by the Corvin theater.

The insurgents at the Kilián barracks, led by Col. Pál Maléter, became the very symbol of the uprising. Maléter, a professional soldier and, according to some, an idealistic Communist, had never been touched by the moral corruption of the Rákosi era. He had been dispatched to the Kilián barracks on the 25th by the Minister of Defense, to help the small garrison there against the sniping of insurgents in the Corvin cinema. "When I arrived at the spot I became convinced that the freedom fighters were not bandits but loyal sons of the Hungarian people," he later said. He offered the insurgents an armistice, and both sides fraternized eagerly. As Soviet tank attacks were launched against the Corvin insurgents, Maléter moved from neutrality to active fighting, and thus became the only high-ranking officer in the Hungarian army who risked joining the insurgents while their success was uncertain. The resistance which he led sustained them at a crucial period of their battle.²⁷

Hungarian People Spontaneously Offer Logistical Support

The outbreak of fighting signaled the complete disruption of economic activity throughout Hungary. Factories, mines, and industrial enterprises shut down in a spontaneous general strike. Public utilities, however, did maintain minimal services. The telephone exchanges remained open and the system was heavily used by the public, which assumed that the AVO no longer had the opportunity to eavesdrop. Hospital services were also continued and the wounded of all categories—insurgents, bystanders, even some AVO, and a few Soviet troops—were handled impartially by medical staffs which worked feverishly to patch them up.

As for food, the insurgents either temporarily left their positions to return home or were fed by nearby housewives. The provisioning of Budapest presented certain difficulties. Food stores and bakeries which had complied with the general strike by closing down on the 24th began on the 26th to open for a few hours in the morning, at the suggestion of the insurgents. Farmers from the surrounding countryside brought in produce by truck and wagon and delivered it to hospitals, barracks, schools, and nurseries. In many cases they sold it cheaply or gave it away to passers-by on the street. This absence of any profiteering on the part of the country people demonstrated their solidarity with the insurrection.²⁸

Operations Outside of Budapest

Outside Budapest, fighting was minimal as the provincial towns rapidly joined the insurrection. Two cities in particular, Győr and Miskolc, took the lead in the provinces, demanding drastic political changes which went well beyond those urged by the insurgents in Budapest. Miskolc, a city of 136,000 in northeastern Hungary, is an industrial center and university town. Here insurgents quickly gained control of the radio station and by Thursday, October 25, Radio Free Miskolc was broadcasting demands going beyond the 10 points. The Miskolc insurgents called for the abolition of the secret police, withdrawal of Soviet troops, and free, open elections. By the 27th, Győr, an industrial center of 66,000, located northwest of Budapest on the main road to Vienna, began broadcasting similar demands. Several other small transmitters also came into the hands of the insurgents.²⁰

The radio stations operated under the direction of local revolutionary councils, governing bodies which sprang up spontaneously to fill the vacuum left by the dissolution of the old order. These councils rapidly took over administrative functions in towns and villages, running government offices, factories, and most economic enterprises. They operated in those few collective farms which continued to exist, in schools, and also in some military garrisons. In factories, these administrative bodies were called workers' councils.

Led by Győr and Miskolc, the provincial councils quickly presented demands which far outstripped those expressed in Budapest. Furthermore, by October 30, the provincial councils of western Hungary, centering on Győr, were moving toward the formation of something close to a rival government unless the authorities in Budapest acceded to their demands for further democratization. The uprising in the provinces was thus both less violent and more revolutionary than it was in Budapest. Less violent, because the bureaucrats and policemen who had exercised power were too few in number and too scattered geographically to function effectively in the absence of a central power. Less violent, also, because the Hungarian army would not fight the insurgents and the scattered Soviet garrisons remained neutral. More revolutionary, because the political objectives of the insurgents entailed not merely reform and liberalization of the Communist system but its replacement by a neutralist Socialist state based on a true coalition government.

Nagy Returns to Power, Government Proclaims Martial Law, and Soviet Leaders Arrive

Meanwhile, with street fighting continuing in Budapest, another battle was being fought out in the secrecy of the Communist party headquarters on Akadémia Street. This contest between the Stalinist and liberal elements of the Hungarian Communist Party was crucial: Hungary's future depended on its outcome. When Imre Nagy addressed the nation just before firing began on the evening of October 23, he had no official status. He had consented to try to placate a

crowd which his young intellectual followers fearfully realized was rapidly heading toward violence and revolution. Equally concerned about the marching crowds, the Central Committee of the party hurriedly convened that evening a meeting originally planned for the 31st. As a result, substantial changes were made in the 78-man Central Committee and the 11-man Politburo. On the morning of the 24th, as Soviet tanks entered the city, the news of Nagy's appointment was broadcast from Radio Budapest's emergency facilities.³⁰

The welcome news of Nagy's return to power was largely offset by the fact that Ernő Gerő remained as first secretary of the party and that other old-guard figures still dominated the government. This was proved by the proclamation of martial law that same morning and the announcement that the government had asked for Soviet military aid to suppress "the dastardly armed attacks of counter-revolutionary gangs. . . ." These statements further incensed a public already deeply angered by Gerő's continuation in office.³¹ Although Nagy appealed at noon for "calm and order," urged the people to "line up behind the Party [and] behind the government," and promised that martial law would not apply to insurgents who surrendered before two o'clock,³² it is doubtful if this announcement impressed the insurgents, who came increasingly into conflict with Soviet tanks as the day wore on.³³

In the early afternoon of the 24th, two high-ranking emissaries arrived from Moscow: Anastas I. Mikoyan, Soviet Vice Premier, and Alexander Suslov, a leading member of the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party. Mikoyan had just returned from Warsaw, where he had accompanied Khrushchev to confer with the Polish Communist leaders and resolve that crisis without bloodshed. Now Mikoyan and Suslov brought the authority and prestige of the Soviet Union to bear on a situation which had degenerated into violence. The two Soviet leaders took rapid action against Gerő, who apparently was roundly scored for his inflexibility and blundering and then summarily dismissed early on the 25th. But the news was not announced at once. And so, while Gerő frantically appealed to Moscow to rescind its order, the Hungarian public continued to see him at the pinnacle of power.³⁴

The Kossuth Square Massacre Inflames the Hungarian People

On the morning of the 25th, large numbers of people, including many housewives and children, swarmed into the streets to find food, exchange rumors, and eventually to form a demonstration which moved toward the Parliament building. The marching crowds persuaded some of the Soviet tank crews stationed at various road blocks to let them pass and, in a few cases, to join them. By 11 o'clock, a crowd of between 10,000 and 20,000 persons, accompanied by six or eight Soviet tanks, was debouching from several streets into Kossuth Square and heading toward the Parliament building, shouting for Imre Nagy to appear and for Gerő's dismissal.³⁵

What happened next is conjecture. It may be that an AVO officer ordered the crowd to disperse at once; if so, few heard the command. In any case, the AVO units stationed on

rooftops flanking the Parliament building opened fire with machineguns. The Soviet tank crews, having also suffered casualties, fired back at the rooftops, and some of their bullets fell into the crowd. The firing continued for some minutes, as casualties mounted among the civilians, who cowered behind park benches, saplings, and bushes. Several hundred persons were wounded, and a number estimated at between 30 and 300 were killed.³⁶ The Kossuth Square massacre proved a turning point in the uprising. It set off a new wave of anger at the AVO, Gerő and his minions, and the Soviet troops, who were accused of duplicity. Desire for revenge brought a mass of new fighters to the barricades.

Nagy and Kádár Plead for a Settlement of the Insurgency

Ironically, the announcement of Gerő's dismissal, broadcast at 12:32, came only an hour too late. János Kádár, a one-time metal worker who spoke the language of the Budapest workers and had been severely tortured while imprisoned by Rákosi, replaced Gerő as first secretary of the Communist party.³⁷ Kádár and Nagy addressed the nation within an hour. Their tone had changed in accordance with events: Kádár admitted that the demonstration of the 23d had started with good intentions, and concluded by pledging that, "after the restoration of order," negotiations with the Soviets would be conducted to settle any outstanding issues. Until then, however, the insurgents "must be repelled by all possible means." Nagy went a good deal further, promising that far-reaching reforms would be submitted to Parliament, the Hungarian and Soviet governments would negotiate "on the basis of equality and national independence" such issues as the withdrawal of Soviet occupation forces, and the government would not apply martial law to those insurgents who ceased firing at once.³⁸

It should be noted that these pledges were conditional upon a unilateral cease-fire by the insurgents. The government thus asserted its legitimacy and its moral right to determine events at the very moment that it lacked the most rudimentary elements of real power.

As Insurgent Demands Rise, the Government Offers Substantial Concessions

In any case, the insurgents could no longer be satisfied by moderate changes in leadership and promises for the distant future. Their forces were growing in number and self-confidence, and their growth was paralleled by the development of revolutionary councils and workers' councils all over the country. Other councils were formed by students, intellectuals, and citizens of all categories. An unofficial governmental structure was rising, superior in both power and prestige to the disintegrating official apparatus. Colonel Maléter's defection to the uprising in the early afternoon of the 26th was a further boost to insurgent morale. The Soviets, moreover, had shown an ambivalence verging on sympathy for the revolution, and reports from Moscow in the Western press even stated that Foreign Minister Shepilov had,

unofficially, ascribed the cause of the revolution to justifiable discontent with the Rákosi-Gerő regime.³⁹

The Communist party's Central Committee responded to these pressures by issuing a highly conciliatory statement on the afternoon of the 26th, proposing that new elections be held; that "the mistakes and crimes of the past be corrected without fail"; that negotiations with the Soviets be conducted "on the basis of independence, complete equality, and noninterference in each other's internal affairs," negotiations to be conditional to the return of Soviet occupation troops to their bases after order was restored; that all insurgents be amnestied if they ceased firing before 10 p.m.; and that wages of factory workers be raised. The party leaders no longer referred to the insurgents as "Fascists" or "counter-revolutionaries," but described their battle as "tragic" and "fratricidal."⁴⁰ Molotov, Mikoyan and Suslov left for Moscow, Gerő and his chief lieutenants departing with them into exile.

Hungary's new freedom was symbolized by Nagy's first step: he left the party headquarters and moved to the Parliament building, a major symbol of Hungarian pride and independence.⁴¹ Nagy's objective now became the creation of a broadly based government which would achieve popularity, hence stability, by fusing the more liberal members of the Communist hierarchy with the young Communists and party sympathizers among the insurgents.

Nagy Fails To Regain Workers' Support

Unlike the Stalinists, Nagy viewed sympathetically the outburst of energy and idealism represented in the workers' councils, which he hoped would help bring order out of chaos and revitalize the Communist party at the grassroots level. His views were expressed programmatically by the National Trade Union Council, which proposed a broad list of reforms, including the establishment of workers' councils in every factory; substantial raises in wages, pension scales, and family allowances; abolition of the hated production norms; increased housing construction; and the resurrection of true trade unions, to serve the workers, not the government.⁴² These inducements were primarily intended for the workers, on whom the Communist leaders, as convinced Marxists, continued to pin their hopes, and only in passing for the students, intellectuals, and peasants.

The workers, however, had totally rejected "their" party, as Nagy soon realized. His move to the Parliament building on the 26th had helped to re-establish communications with the people, and delegations from various revolutionary councils began putting their case to him personally, beginning with two groups from south Budapest and from Miskolc. But their demands for the immediate departure of all Soviet troops from Hungary, the dissolution of the AVO, and other broadly democratic measures were coldly received by Nagy, who was deeply concerned about the Soviet reaction and, above all, the possibility of a resurrection of the old,

prewar rightist and reactionary groups. Nevertheless, Nagy's ideas were beginning to change as he grasped the profoundly radical, anti-Communist temper of the nation.⁴³

Nagy Seeks To Broaden Base of Support by Including Non-Communists in the Government

Popular reaction to the news that Nagy was forming a new government, announced on the morning of the 27th, was unenthusiastic. The new Minister of Interior, who controlled the AVÖ, was Ferenc Münnich. A lawyer in his seventies, known as a staunch Communist whose distaste for Rákosi stemmed from tactical, not ideological, considerations, Münnich was more popular than his predecessor, but nevertheless a disappointment. Three political leaders from pre-Communist days were included: Zoltán Tildy, Minister of State; Ferenc Erdei, named Deputy Premier; and, above all, Béla Kovács, Minister of Agriculture.

Tildy and Kovács had been nationally known leaders of the powerful Smallholder (i.e., predominantly peasant) party before the Communists had ended normal political life in 1948. Erdei had been prominent in the National Peasant party, a group of leftist intellectuals active during 1945-48. Both Erdei and Tildy had collaborated with the Communists in the past, and their public reputation had suffered thereby. Despite Tildy's eight years of house arrest, he was mistrusted by the politically knowledgeable, although his political acumen was grudgingly acknowledged. Kovács, by contrast, was widely respected as an ardent democrat and Hungarian nationalist who had fought hard against the Communists during 1945-47 and had not compromised his beliefs despite nine grueling years in Soviet prisons. Still recuperating from his imprisonment, Kovács temporized about entering the government, and did not actually do so until November 1.

Nagy's concessions showed that, rebuffed by the workers, he was at last trying to gain support from the peasants and from those older Hungarians for whom Kovács represented the ideals of political and national freedom. With Smallholders and National Peasants as active members of the government, it became possible for these and other parties to resurrect themselves. Although this development lay in the future, every hour of fighting brought it closer.⁴⁴

As the Insurgency Becomes More Radical, Nagy Orders a Government Cease-Fire

Recognizing that the inclusion of Kovács, Tildy, and Erdei in the cabinet was clearly a response to pressure, the insurgents were encouraged to press even harder. By October 27-28, the revolutionary councils in the provinces had begun to act independently. Led by the councils at Győr and Miskolc, the new provincial authorities were not appeased by cabinet changes. They repeatedly broadcast demands for the immediate departure of Soviet troops from all of Hungary,

withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact, abolition of the AVO, and free elections; and they lent force to their demands by threatening to continue the general strike.⁴⁶

The increasingly radical mood of the country apparently led the Soviet commander in Budapest and the Hungarian army staff to propose putting down the uprising once and for all, with an all-out attack against its very heart, the Kilián barracks. Nagy, fearing that peace could never be restored if such a blood-bath occurred, threatened early on October 28 to resign unless the attack was cancelled, and won his point. He thus demonstrated that he now had the authority to bring his military subordinates under control.⁴⁶

He followed this triumph with a momentous decision. Just after noon on the 28th, the government ordered a unilateral cease-fire; its forces were to fire only if attacked. Fighting did not stop at once, but dwindled gradually as the Soviet forces halted their tank patrols and their attacks on Kilián barracks. Even then, sporadic firing occurred between Soviet tanks and the younger, more irresponsible insurgents. By the next day the government had directly ordered the AVO and the *Stalinists* in the officer corps to accept the revolution and "show respect for the people in all circumstances. . . ."⁴⁷

A Victorious Interval for the Insurgents

Monday, October 29—the seventh day of the uprising—brought, in the words of *Szabad Nép*, a "victorious dawn." The fighting had largely ended. Among the younger insurgents, confidence in their military prowess was high. The count of destroyed Soviet tanks ran between 50 and 75. This suggests, as does the casualty list of some 3,500 on both sides, including 250 dead, that the fighting during the first phase of the uprising was of relatively low intensity.⁴⁸ Its prime object, in any case, had been the Hungarian Communist hierarchy, not the Soviet army. The insurgents had succeeded.

Their problem now was to consolidate their position by securing Soviet acceptance of the outcome. Political freedom and national independence had to be maintained without alienating the Soviets, who were concerned lest Hungary leave the satellite bloc. It might therefore be necessary to forgo some liberal measures. This, Nagy and his associates understood; many other Hungarians, flushed by their victory, did not. A few months before, Nagy's task would have appeared impossible. Recent events in Poland, however, had proved otherwise, for Gomulka had successfully insisted on full independence and equality in the relations between Poland and the Soviet Union.

Nagy failed where the Poles had succeeded. Within a week after the "victorious dawn," the Hungarian uprising was quelled by the full might of Soviet military force. When and why did the Kremlin decide to move against Hungary? Did some action or series of actions by the Nagy government lead to the Soviet decision? The events of the week from October 28 to November 3 provide clues to some of the answers.

Nagy Moves To Absorb Insurgent Goals and Fighters

The first order of business was the departure of Soviet troops from Budapest, and this was announced on the 29th by the Defense Minister, Gen. Károly Janza, who stated that Soviet forces would begin to leave Budapest at dawn the next day. The withdrawal, completed on the 31st,⁴⁹ helped swell the movement toward democracy and national independence. Traditional national emblems replaced the Communist star worn by soldiers and police before the uprising. Some 25 daily newspapers, of limited size, mixed quality, and diverse opinions, began appearing in Budapest, a tangible indication of Hungary's new democracy. By this time at least 14 insurgent radio stations, each offering the views of a different revolutionary council, were broadcasting from various towns.

The "free" radio stations were joined by Radio Budapest in urging insurgents to enter the National Guard which was being formed throughout the country to give official status to armed citizens. Pál Maléter was promoted to major general and became Deputy Defense Minister on November 1. Nagy granted to a Revolutionary Committee of the Armed Forces full powers over all military and security forces and placed at its head Maj. Gen. Béla Király, who had recently emerged from five years' imprisonment. Király and his committee attacked the problem of unifying the command of an army still dominated by Stalinist senior officers with a National Guard made up of armed insurgents.⁵⁰

Disestablishment of the AVO

Disbandment of the AVO presented another prickly problem. Political freedom was hardly possible so long as the AVO continued to exist; it was abolished on the 29th, at which time Interior Minister Münnich also stated that a new police force "purged of all without clean records" was being organized.⁵¹ Representatives of the Budapest AVO contingent appealed on the 30th for fair treatment and an amnesty for members with unstained records. Screening centers were established at the Interior Ministry and district police stations, where rank and file AVO men, many of whom were hapless conscripts, appeared to answer questionnaires. The blameless were released; others were held for trial.

The surrender of the AVO was stimulated by a rash of lynchings. The ugliest incident took place on the morning of the 30th when a mob supported by insurgent tanks stormed the central headquarters of the Budapest branch of the Communist party and killed the 45 young AVO men within. This measure, though not typical of insurgent behavior, spurred the formation of a National Guard which would keep order. Although the AVO was legally dead, most of its officers dared not surrender and either went into hiding or tried, apparently with some success, to infiltrate insurgent groups or the reborn political parties. The only component of the AVO with a clean record, the 20,000-man Frontier Guard, had proclaimed its allegiance to the new regime on the 29th and had been unhesitatingly welcomed.⁵²

Nagy Announces a Coalition Government with Communists in a Minority Position

The ultimate blow to the Communist system in Hungary came on the afternoon of October 30, when Nagy officially announced the replacement of the one-party Communist system by a coalition government based on the four parties that had existed in 1945. The existing cabinet of 20 members, most of whom were Communists of various persuasions, was to be subordinated to a new body, a separate seven-man "inner cabinet." Of the seven, three were Communists, (Nagy, Kádár, and Nagy's chief lieutenant, Géza Losonczy); while Kovács and Tildy represented the Smallholders; Erdel, the National Peasants; and a space was allotted for the Social Democrats. In principle, therefore, the Communists would be in the minority in the important inner cabinet. Nagy stated explicitly that negotiations for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from all of Hungary would begin "without delay," and he officially recognized the local revolutionary councils, saying that the government "relies on them and asks for their support." His speech, devoid of Communist phraseology, struck a strongly patriotic note.⁵³

In contrast, Kádár begged "pure, honest, and well-meaning Communists" to stand by the party and "fight, even if to some extent from scratch . . . for the benefit of our ideals, people, compatriots, and country."⁵⁴ But his pleas fell on deaf ears, for the party was defunct. Many of its offices had been sacked. The streets of Csepel and Ujpest, the principal working-class districts of Budapest, were dotted with small fires, as party membership books were publicly burned. According to one authority, the party would have done well to win 6 to 8 percent of the vote in an election.⁵⁵ Under these circumstances, Nagy, Kádár, and the other new Communist leaders tried to draw a sharp line between past and present by renaming their organization the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party.

Tildy and Erdel, whose speeches followed Nagy's on October 30, congratulated the revolutionaries on their accomplishments and urged their respective party colleagues to resurrect the Smallholders and the National Peasants in preparation for free elections in the future. In response, the old leaders gathered at various headquarters quickly established in Budapest. Officials who had spent the Rákosi era in cautious obscurity now negotiated for automobiles, office equipment, and printing plants. Recruiting of members moved forward rapidly, and by November 3 the non-Communist party organizations had taken root throughout Budapest and the provinces.⁵⁶

A View of Nagy's Political Evolution

Nagy was reacting to pressure, but he apparently reasoned that just as the insurgent street fighters could be controlled through incorporation into the National Guard, so the political parties could channel popular passions from the street corner to the ballot box. Also, there was a personal element in Nagy's decision, difficult to measure, but certainly present. It

appears that Nagy, deeply stirred by the idealism, passion, and undeniably democratic objectives of the revolution, began to examine his own basic ideas and thus to move from advocacy of a liberalized, humanistic, but nevertheless authoritarian communism to a sincere belief that no government had the right to defy the will of the people. By at least the 30th, therefore, Nagy's personal acceptance of democratic ideals influenced his decisions no less than careful calculations of political profit and loss.⁵⁷

As the traditional political parties were reconstituted, offering a normal outlet for the citizen's political passions, Nagy and many others lost their fear that the excitement and vengeful emotionalism triggered by the revolution might be exploited by rightist and semi-Fascist elements to restore the authoritarian and highly stratified world of the decades before 1944. In retrospect, this appears to have been unlikely, but the danger was nevertheless deeply felt among many liberal and leftist Hungarians over the age of 25, whose hatred of Rákosi and Gerő was fully matched by their loathing for the old regime under which they had grown up. The Smallholders' leader, Bela Kovács, expressed it neatly on the 31st: "No one must dream of going back to the world of counts, bankers, and capitalists: that world is definitely gone."⁵⁸

De-Communisation of Hungary Stirs Soviet Activity

But the Hungarian political revival was accompanied by signs of Soviet alarm. Late in the evening of October 30, Mikoyan and Suslov had returned to Budapest for talks with Nagy and other government figures. The details of their trip are scant, but obviously Moscow was disturbed by the pace and intensity of Hungary's move toward a Western-style democracy. The two Russians left early on the 31st, affably enough. But that same evening revolutionary councils throughout eastern Hungary reported a substantial Soviet troop buildup. Reconnaissance by the Hungarian air force confirmed the reports, but its activity was cut short by the Soviet occupation of many airfields on November 1 and 2.⁵⁹

The nature of the Soviet deployment, with many units advancing while those in Budapest withdrew and some left Hungary entirely, made analysis of Moscow's intentions very difficult. Some Hungarians argued that the troop movements were intended merely to lend weight to Russian negotiations; others, that the prestige of the Soviet army, tarnished by the "defeat" in Budapest, was to be restored by a massive display of might, followed by a withdrawal to which the Hungarians were to accord full military honors. Still others, granting that the Russians might actually attack, apparently dismissed out of hand the idea of military resistance. In an armed struggle with the Soviet Union, little could be gained and much lost. The broad, rolling, practically treeless landscape of eastern Hungary lay open to the airplane and the tank. Only a few small, mountainous outcroppings west of the Danube offered shelter to guerrillas, while few substantial natural obstacles stood in the way of Soviet columns. Moreover, Hungary, whose population of barely 10 million had increased but little in 15 years, could ill afford substantial losses.⁶⁰

Hungary Is Isolated Within the Soviet Bloc

No wealth of allies abroad compensated for this lack of military might at home. The vigorous support which the Polish and Yugoslav press had initially given to Nagy declined sharply as Hungary moved toward a non-Communist government. In Poland, where emotions stirred by the peaceful revolution of mid-October were still high, the effects of the Hungarian drive appeared dangerously unpredictable. For Yugoslavia, the rise of a non-Communist Hungary was a disturbing prospect which might revive traditional demands for the Yugoslav territory in which some 500,000 Hungarians still lived. Above all, both Gomulka and Tito remained firm Marxists, who viewed the death of communism in Hungary as an essentially reactionary step which would encourage anti-Communist elements in all of Eastern Europe.⁶¹

The other satellite regimes—East Germany, Bulgaria, and especially Rumania and Czechoslovakia—felt nothing but antagonism toward the uprising. They regarded any indication that a Communist government could be overthrown from within or that the Soviets might not choose to back up their puppets as certain to encourage the spirit of revolt. The problem was especially acute for Czechoslovakia and Rumania; both had large, well-organized Hungarian minorities (the first, over 600,000; the latter almost 1,700,000) located in compact groups hard by their borders with Hungary. The danger was met with a panicky combination of force and fraud: police and troops were rushed to the Hungarian-speaking areas, security precautions were intensified, the universities were carefully watched, and Communist leaders from the capitals hurried forth to promise, cajole, and threaten. But the Rumanian and Czechoslovak party bosses fully realized that the danger would not end until the Hungarian insurrection was crushed. They undoubtedly did not hesitate to say so and were backed up by the Bulgarian and East German Communists. From his Communist neighbors, Nagy could expect nothing but hostility.⁶²

The West Offers No Military Support

There remained the West. The border with Austria had been unofficially open to foreigners with legitimate business since about October 27. Newspaper reporters from all over the world had quickly arrived in Budapest. Of great interest to the world at large had been the news that József Cardinal Mindszenty, Roman Catholic Prince Primate of Hungary, had been released from prison after seven years' confinement. The International Red Cross and various religious groups had organized the transport of food and medical supplies by truck and plane from Vienna to Budapest; and an airlift had brought in some 100 planeloads, beginning around October 30. These evidences of external interest had helped the morale of many Hungarians, to whom even the slightest contact with the Western democracies seemed a portent of powerful diplomatic and, some hoped, military support.

But the Atlantic powers were deeply split over the Suez question, as Great Britain, France, and Israel moved to attack Egypt, while the United States and many Asian and African nations

protested. The Israeli attack began on October 29. British and French aircraft began their strikes on the 31st, paratroopers were dropped on November 5, and an amphibious assault on the Port Said area took place on the 6th. The international nature of the Suez problem, combined with its potentially dangerous repercussions in the Middle East and other non-Western areas, inevitably attracted the maximum of attention and concern in the chancelleries of the West.

The Hungarian problem, by contrast, was far less susceptible to action by the United Nations, while action by the United States would have led to grave risk of retaliation in kind by the Soviet Union: the possibility of Soviet airborne "volunteers" at Suez was not taken lightly. The possibility of escalation into the nuclear realm was even more menacing.

Also, the entrance of the United States into Hungary would of necessity have meant the use of Austrian ground or air space and thus a violation of the demilitarization provisions of the Austrian State Treaty of May 1955. Even assuming that Austria could have been induced to permit this, such action would have left her open to a Soviet counterstroke which, legally speaking, would have had some justification. To rescue one small power by first violating the rights of another would hardly have enhanced the U.S. position among its smaller allies.⁶³

Nagy Requests No External Aid and Prepares No Internal Defense

To what extent the Nagy government appreciated all the nuances of the Suez crisis and of the mood in Washington is uncertain, since there was virtually no contact during the uprising between the U.S. and British Embassies in Budapest and the Hungarian government. It is, however, clear that the Hungarian leaders did not seek Western military aid, even under United Nations auspices, for fear that Hungary would become a second Korea (this analogy was widely used) or that, at the very least, the entrance of Western troops would mean the replacement of Hungary's socialist system by capitalism.

For these reasons, the Hungarian government rejected any idea of meeting force with force. No call for the mobilization of reservists was issued or apparently even contemplated. Nor was any attempt made during November 1-3 to fortify or reinforce Budapest, to prepare railroads and bridges for demolition, or to make provision for guerrilla warfare. Instead, the government tried to keep all news regarding the Soviet advance out of the press and radio, fearing that excitement among the people might lead to a clash with Soviet troops.⁶⁴

Nagy Invokes Warsaw Treaty and Declares Hungary Neutral

As Soviet troops entered Hungarian territory on November 1, Nagy played his only card, the Warsaw Treaty, demanding an explanation of the troop movements and threatening to abrogate the treaty and declare Hungarian neutrality unless the troops were withdrawn. He invoked a Soviet declaration of October 30, which had conceded that Warsaw Treaty signatories had to consent before troops could be stationed on their soil by another signatory. Nevertheless, Soviet

troops continued to enter the country, and the explanations offered by Soviet Ambassador Yuri Andropov were blatantly specious, as if the Soviets no longer cared even to maintain a facade.

Nagy's reply was to declare Hungary neutral. In agreement with the cabinet and the Communist party leaders, he repudiated the Warsaw Treaty, creating a situation in which the presence of Soviet troops violated Hungary's neutrality. He also appealed to the United Nations to discuss the neutrality question at the forthcoming General Assembly meeting. It was hoped that such U.N. action as the dispatch to Budapest of the Secretary General or of an international fact-finding committee might check the Soviet advance.⁶⁵

Soviets Arrest Hungarian Negotiators and Attack Budapest

On November 2, the Soviets replied, in terms which seemed hopeful, almost conciliatory. Andropov suggested that Nagy organize two delegations, one political and one military, to discuss the outstanding issues with their Soviet counterparts. Nagy immediately appointed a four-man military delegation headed by General Maléter, and three Soviet general officers were ceremonially received at the Parliament. The discussions, which began on the 3d, were encouraging—the Soviet negotiators centered their efforts on getting the Hungarians to make various ceremonial displays of respect, if and when the Soviet troops withdrew. At Soviet suggestion, an evening session was held at their headquarters at Tököl, just south of Budapest. Suddenly, about midnight, the telephone connection between the Hungarian delegation at Tököl and its military headquarters in Budapest was broken, and Gen. Ivan Serov, chief of the Soviet Secret Police, personally arrested General Maléter and his associates.⁶⁶

In the predawn hours of November 4, reports flooded Hungarian army headquarters that strong Soviet armored columns were entering the capital and driving toward its center. Nagy, hoping to the end to avoid all-out fighting, refused General Király's request to open fire. Cannon fire could be heard at 5:19 a.m., as Nagy for the last time spoke to his people by radio, informing them of the Soviet attack. Within a few hours Budapest Radio broadcast frantic appeals for help to the outside world in several languages, and an SOS signal was heard as late as 8:30 a.m., when the transmitter went dead. By this time, most of the government buildings had been lost to the Soviet attackers. The few insurgent defenders scattered, retreating to outlying districts. Cardinal Mindszenty fled to the protection of the American Legation.* Nagy sought asylum in the Yugoslav Embassy.⁶⁷ Other members of the government went into hiding.

Hungarian Defense Is Sporadic and Uncoordinated

Elsewhere in the city, the approximately 25,000 members of the National Guard, aided by volunteers of all ages and both sexes, rallied to the barricades and positions which many had

* He was still living there in late 1965.

occupied during the fighting of October 24-28. Their efforts were uncoordinated; in any case, there was no systematic defense plan for the city. Moreover, a group of senior army staff officers, not yet dismissed despite their known pro-Soviet sympathies, took over the Defense Ministry and issued a general order directing all commanders to support the Soviet forces. None dared to do so, and many individual soldiers deserted to join their fellow Hungarians, but the army as such remained neutral.⁶⁸

General Király and his staff, forced by the Soviet advance to move from the police building in central Budapest to a headquarters in the western suburbs, found command impossible to exercise. The telephone system and the barracks, the source of insurgent ammunition, were taken over by the Soviets. There were no disciplined, cohesive units at the general's disposal. By the 8th or 9th, Király and some 400 student insurgents began retreating across western Hungary to the Austrian border, where his men split into smaller parties and crossed over by the 20th.⁶⁹

Resistance to Soviet Arms Is Greatest Among Hungarian Workers

By November 7 street fighting in Budapest had ended, and resistance thereafter centered in a number of industrial areas, especially at Csepel, where 40,000 workers supported by some regular army artillerymen with 85-mm. guns made an excellent showing against Soviet armor, artillery, and aircraft. With flanks relatively secure because only a few roads entered the island, the workers were strongly sited, had an abundance of arms and ammunition and gasoline for fire bombs, and felt a deep sense of corporate unity and militancy. With great tenacity and ingenuity, they advanced out of the complex passageways on the factory grounds to attack the road-bound Soviet tanks, retreating when hard pressed, then regrouping to attack from the flank. Fighting here ended on the 10th after intensive bombardment by Soviet artillery. Heavy fighting also raged at Ujpest, north of the city, but it, too, ended about November 10-11.

Ironically enough, heavy fighting also occurred at Dunapentele. Located some 70 miles downriver from Budapest and formerly named Sztalinváros, this complex of steel mills, iron works, and chemical industries had been developed as the party's most important experiment in industrialization, and was a Communist stronghold. But its citizens resisted vigorously, and even after November 8, when the town was occupied by Soviet troops with much destruction, some 300 insurgents continued to resist in the countryside for several days.⁷⁰

Most other Hungarian towns and villages were no better prepared than Budapest when Soviet armor, backed up by artillery and, in some cases, by aircraft and parachute troops, flooded in at dawn on the 4th. Except for a few antiaircraft units, which followed the lead of their force commander in Budapest by supporting the insurgents, the Hungarian army remained aloof and its units were surrounded, disarmed, or otherwise neutralized by Soviet forces. Almost all the towns fell immediately, as the insurgents, loath to see their birthplaces shot to pieces, either

went into hiding after the first unsuccessful skirmishes, or else retreated to the countryside to fight as guerrillas. The insurgents in Pécs, an industrial town of 87,000 near the Yugoslav border, fled to the 30-mile-long Mecsek hill mass outside the city, to be joined by coal miners and university students. They harassed the pursuing Soviet troops with raids and ambushes for about two weeks, but ammunition and food shortages, difficulties in caring for the wounded, and the beginning of winter snows forced them to disband.

In the absence of Western intervention, hopes dropped as the encircling Soviet forces closed in. Many of the younger insurgents fled to Austria, a few went to Yugoslavia, and others returned home. In general, western Hungary was the only provincial area where resistance lingered. Here the terrain was more favorable, Soviet power less awesome, Western power much closer, and the example set by the Budapest insurgents had a greater effect. Even so, resistance here was completely crushed by November 18-20.⁷¹

Estimates of Insurgent Casualties

There are many estimates of Hungarian casualties, ranging from a high of 40,000 to 50,000 dead, to the figure of 25,000 offered by India's Prime Minister Nehru, but rejected by the authoritative U.N. Report. The U.N. figure, adjusted to separate out the losses of the October fighting, shows 1,500 to 1,750 dead and about 8,000 wounded for Budapest alone. Most of these were men in the 15-30-year age category. It is impossible to distinguish between combatant and noncombatant casualties. As for physical destruction, an official Hungarian estimate (later revised downward, for unknown reasons) is that 40,000 buildings were damaged, 23,000 seriously, and 4,000 completely destroyed, largely in the November fighting.⁷²

COUNTERINSURGENCY

Just as the story of the insurgency is the story of Imre Nagy, so the counterinsurgency belongs to János Kádár. Subordinate in importance to Nagy during the early, successful days of the uprising, Kádár emerged to prominence with the second Soviet intervention in November. In contrast to Nagy, Kádár temporized and procrastinated during the October fighting. Although firmly opposed to Gerő and all that he symbolized, Kádár was too rigid a Communist to follow Nagy into wholehearted acceptance of the uprising.

On the evening of October 23, Gerő had stood very much alone. Of the Hungarian forces available to check the insurrection, none seemed either willing or able to effect a victory. The civil police force supported the insurgents from the outset. The army proved of no use against the insurgents, and some of its members in fact joined them. The military cadets were equally unreliable. The AVO lacked a riot force component quickly available for emergencies; instead, its men were scattered in small groups on various duties throughout Hungary.

Stalinist Commanders Work To Prevent a Rebellious Outburst in the Hungarian Army

The army comprised about 200,000 men, organized in nine infantry and two mechanized divisions, plus supporting troops; these units were very largely garrisoned in central and western Hungary. Expanded and thoroughly reorganized after 1948, the army followed Soviet models in training, equipment, doctrine, discipline, and even clothing and insignia. This violation of national traditions had deeply offended many conscripts and junior officers, who resented having to emulate a country they considered culturally inferior. However, the 80 to 100 general officers of the high command--selected because of their proletarian lineage and loyalty to Rákosi and the Soviet Union, and trained in Soviet military schools--owed their position to the Communist system, whose power and ultimate triumph they accepted as gospel. Their beliefs, bolstered by their sense of discipline and by the presence of Soviet "advisers," left the generals with little sympathy for the uprising.⁷³

To suppress the revolution by using the Hungarian army was clearly impossible in light of the demonstrated unreliability of its troops. It is probable, therefore, that the Defense Ministry, which remained firmly in the hands of convinced Stalinists until October 30, directed the Communist generals to avoid any action, such as a march on the capital, which might provoke a rebellious outburst by the rank and file, and to mark time until the political situation became clearer. This policy was fairly successful. Although the small garrisons of Győr and Miskolc joined the local revolutionary councils, and many of the smaller units in the mountainous north simply disintegrated as the men deserted and headed for their homes, the strongly pro-Soviet corps commander of southern Hungary kept a tight control over his divisions, which largely remained neutral. Some units which showed insurgent sympathies were split up and their components hastily transferred elsewhere; in other cases, trusted Communists kept close control over communications, ammunition, and gasoline supplies, and hid vital parts of tanks, vehicles, and artillery pieces. Although the disaffection with the party had spread to many of the army political officers, those in the provinces were relatively isolated from the turmoil of Budapest and usually remained loyal to the Gerő government.

The same did not apply to the students of the military academies. Those in Budapest had been active participants in Petőfi Circle meetings and were ruled out as effective counterinsurgents. Officer candidates from schools outside the city were therefore ordered into town to guard party headquarters and other official buildings. Like the army officers they hoped to become, these young men had working-class backgrounds and good party records, but their efforts on the part of the counterinsurgency were minimal. The conclusion seems warranted that "there was no single instance recorded of Hungarian troops fighting on the Soviet side against their fellow countrymen."⁷⁴

The AVO: Strength and Operations

Only the AVO showed real loyalty to the old regime. Some 10,000 AVO men were stationed in Budapest and between 20,000 and 30,000 in the provinces, where any town of 5,000 or more inhabitants had a small contingent. Specific instances of AVO violence against insurgents were not common, although a few occurred. An episode at Magyaróvár, a factory town very close to the Austrian border, particularly embittered the insurgents. Here the AVO fired on an unarmed demonstration by 5,000 citizens, killing some 80 and wounding about 160. At Miskolc the AVO killed 16 demonstrators. In both places the people wreaked their vengeance, lynching several officers. In some instances the AVO dispersed and went into hiding or surrendered to the revolutionary councils, which often jailed them for safekeeping. Some members, loyal to the end, infiltrated insurgent groups. According to figures of the Kádár government, 234 AVO men were killed during the uprising; of this number perhaps 100 were lynched by mobs.⁷⁵

Soviet Strength, Weaponry, and Tactics

Virtually all the fighting against the insurgents was therefore done by Soviet forces, aided on occasion by a few AVO men. These troops were drawn almost entirely from the 2d and 17th Mechanized Divisions, stationed respectively at Cegléd, 51 miles southeast of Budapest, and Székesfehérvár, 41 miles southwest of the capital. The two divisions totaled about 20,000 men with 600 tanks and some armored cars, but estimates vary as to how many actually saw combat: 10,000 men and 300-400 tanks seems a fair approximation.

The tanks performed both defensive and offensive tasks. Some mounted continual guard over the bridges connecting Buda and Pest, others protected the various Soviet military and political liaison offices on the hilly streets of Buda; still others stood around the Parliament and the Communist party headquarters to back up the AVO guards in the corridors and on surrounding rooftops. Soviet tanks blocked certain key intersections on the boulevards leading into the heart of Pest, thus partially protecting its government buildings.⁷⁶

Soviet tanks also patrolled the main streets in the inner city, at first individually, and then, as losses were suffered, in small groups. The T-34 crews usually avoided the narrow side streets. They soon learned to empty their vulnerable reserve fuel tanks, which the insurgents tried to pierce before throwing gasoline bombs. Tanks occasionally fired indiscriminately at passers-by, a tactic stemming from experience compounded by fear, as the crews learned that even children of 14 and 15 sometimes had gasoline bombs in their school satchels. Under these circumstances, the tank crews sometimes tried to clear the streets and keep windows closed by firing their machineguns at random. At nightfall, according to one informant, tank patrols retired for rest and refueling to the permanent Soviet military base at Tököl, on Csepel Island. The insurgents apparently never attacked this base, or tried to destroy or defend the bridges connecting it to the capital.⁷⁷

Soviet Occupation Troops Prove Sympathetic to the Insurgents

The anxiety produced by street fighting during peacetime was a relatively minor threat to Soviet morale when compared to the difficulties of conscience involved. Most of the Soviet occupation troops had been stationed in Hungary for some time and knew some Hungarian. Many younger Hungarians also knew Russian, which was mandatory in the schools. Thus both sides could communicate, and the troops quickly realized that the revolutionaries were not "reactionaries" or "Fascists," as Soviet political officers asserted, but ordinary workers and students whose initial objective of a liberalized communism paralleled Khrushchev's drive for de-Stalinization. Moreover, for an army whose ideological raison d'être was defense of the working class, firing on the Hungarian workers was the sort of grotesque anomaly supposed to occur only under capitalism.

Although it is difficult to substantiate reports that some Soviet troops actually gave their weapons and even their vehicles to the insurgents, there certainly was considerable fraternization between the Russians and Hungarian civilians in Budapest during October 24-30. Many Hungarians tried to convince the Russians that their intervention was morally indefensible, and some Russians were easily persuaded. It therefore seems fair to conclude that low morale was a definite factor in the unaggressive behavior of the Russian troops.⁷⁸

Soviet Operations Restrained During First Phase of Insurgency

During this period the entire Soviet counterinsurgency effort was restrained. No Soviet aircraft reconnoitered or demonstrated over Hungary. Neither artillery nor bombing planes were used against Budapest. Nor was the city blockaded, its food supply cut off, or its public utilities halted. Although Soviet forces controlled the core of Budapest, they made neither mass nor selective arrests. Instead, they were content to protect certain buildings and to send out patrols, which apparently lacked clear-cut orders. Thus, while some Soviet patrols butted hard against the insurgent positions, as at the Kilian barracks, others remained aloof from the fighting.

In the provinces, Soviet garrisons hardly stirred. The desultory fighting which occurred in one or two towns was atypical. In most places, Soviet garrisons, often of battalion strength, behaved with strict neutrality, and stayed off the streets. In Győr, the Soviet commanding officer informed the revolutionary council of his neutral intentions; the council reciprocated by maintaining the garrison's food supply.

The Soviets showed great sensitivity, however, regarding the frontier with Austria, possibly fearing the infiltration of Western agents or of members of the Hungarian émigré organizations in Germany. The Frontier Guards were too demoralized to keep a firm control over travellers. Several roadblocks were therefore quickly established by Soviet tanks on the main road from Budapest to the frontier, and eastbound travellers and their vehicles were thoroughly searched.

Moreover, some elements of the 32d and 34th Mechanized Divisions moved on October 25-26 from their stations at Timișoara, in northwest Rumania, across Hungary to Budapest, where they crossed the Danube and advanced to the Austrian frontier. Other Soviet units from the Carpatho-Ukraine peaceably occupied certain strategic communications installations in north-east Hungary. But no major reinforcements were immediately dispatched from the Soviet Union.⁷⁹

In the absence of firm data, it is possible only to conjecture about the reasons for the Soviet tactics before November 4. They contradict the widely held view that, from the very outset of the insurgency, the Soviets threw their weight behind the Gerő government and against the insurgents. It is possible that Soviet leaders were divided in their councils and acted from indecision. But their tactics seem to corroborate the argument that the Soviets intended to interpose their troops between the Hungarian government and the insurgents until mass pressure could force the party to purge itself of Stalinists. Underlying this calculated risk was the assumption that many Hungarians, especially the Budapest workers, would remain true to the Communist party if it was liberalized. That the workers, and not merely the peasants and the remnants of the old bourgeoisie, could be completely estranged from communism was clearly inconceivable to the Soviets, as well as to most Hungarian Communist leaders. Until this realization took root—providing the impetus behind the Soviet intervention in force on November 4—political, not military, measures formed the principal Soviet instrument for the restoration of peace in Hungary.⁸⁰

Under Soviet Direction, Hungarian Communists Led by Kádár "Clean House"

The rapid promotion of János Kádár was a major step in that direction. Kádár, an enemy of the AVO, from whom he had suffered severe torture, had been popular among the Budapest workers, whose language he spoke and whose life he had once shared. Yet his devotion to the party and to the Soviet Union was unquestioned, and he was extremely amenable to direction and control. In contrast to Nagy, who gradually moved from resistance to the revolution to identification with it, Kádár remained always the convinced Communist and counterinsurgent.⁸¹

After replacing Gerő as First Secretary of the Central Committee on October 25, Kádár cooperated with Nagy, apparently accepting the view that the uprising was the expression of justified popular dissatisfaction with the Stalinist era. On October 28, the seventy-eight-man Central Committee turned over direction of party affairs to a six-man Presidium which Kádár headed; when Nagy, a few days later, announced the establishment of a four-party coalition government, Kádár entered it as leader of the Communist party.

With former Communist stalwarts leaving the party en masse, the need for an overhaul was clear. A fresh start was taken through the formation of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party

on November 1. On the same day, Kádár joined Imre Nagy and Ferenc Münnich in negotiating with Mikoyan and Suslov regarding the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Hungary. From then until November 4, when Kádár suddenly appeared as the political leader of the counterinsurgents, he dropped completely out of sight. He apparently left Budapest secretly for a Soviet headquarters in eastern Hungary.

Soviets Recall Occupation Troops and Deploy Large, New Forces

Meanwhile, three concurrent maneuvers were executed by Soviet military forces between October 30 and November 3.

First, the Soviet units in Budapest began withdrawing on the 30th, and about 200 of their tanks and accompanying vehicles took up positions astride the highways north and east of the city. Detachments were employed during November 1-2 to either occupy or take up commanding positions around the three airfields in the Budapest area, thus barring them to the Hungarian air force and ensuring their availability for later use as staging areas by fresh Soviet troops. Other units from Budapest left Hungary entirely, crossing the Rumanian frontier on October 30-31; their behavior during the earlier fighting may have raised doubts regarding their reliability.

Second, fresh troops entered Hungary from the northeast and east on the 30th and 31st. No fighting occurred as the Soviet spearheads drove rapidly across the great Hungarian plain, crossed the Danube—whose bridges were neither blocked nor destroyed—and fanned out across western Hungary. Vanguards reached the Austrian frontier on November 2 and 3. They soon sealed off the frontier to all traffic and faced westward to check any incursions from that direction. In their sprint across Hungary, the Soviet columns left strong detachments on the outskirts of the larger towns to dig in and await orders. Other detachments secured the main railway junctions and stations and surrounded Hungarian airfields and army cantonments.

Third, the main Soviet effort was reserved for Budapest. The Soviet force was estimated at 100,000 men, supported by 2,500 tanks, a number of self-propelled guns and armored cars, plus 1,000 supporting vehicles; and the greater part of this force was used to encircle the city. By November 2, some 70,000 men and 2,000 tanks had taken up positions in an arc 50 to 60 miles out from Budapest, touching the Hatvan-Gyöngyös area to the northeast, the Cegléd-Szolnok region in the southeast, Kecskemét to the south, and Dunaföldvár, across the Danube on the southwest.⁸²

Kádár Replaces Nagy and Promises a Liberalized Communist Government

Kádár and his Soviet allies now moved politically against Nagy. Broadcasting from Szolnok, in the predawn hours of November 4, Kádár charged that the Nagy government, by its irresolution

and permissiveness, had set Hungary on the path to outright counterrevolution and the restoration of capitalism. He announced the formation of a new Hungarian Revolutionary Worker-Peasant Government, with Ferenc Münnich as Deputy Premier and Minister of Defense and Public Security.

But Kádár denied any intention of returning to the days of Rákosi and Gerő, offering instead a "liberalized" communism which would bring economic improvement to the workers. Relations between Hungary and the Soviet Union would be on the basis of equality, Kádár promised, and he begged the people to stop fighting and return to work. His government, he added, had "requested the Soviet Army Command to help our nation smash the sinister forces of reaction and restore order. . . ."83

Soviet Troops and Tanks Attack Budapest

That same day, the large Soviet forces surrounding Budapest attacked the city. Unlike the occupation troops involved in the October fighting, few of these newly arrived troops showed any sympathy for the insurgents. This time the army newspapers and political officers were successful in implanting the firm conviction that a Fascist counterrevolution had broken out in Hungary under German and American guidance, and that the peace and security of the Soviet Union was at stake.

Apparently under instructions to smash the insurgents as quickly as possible, the Soviets acted with vigor and ruthlessness. Guided by AVO men who had come out of hiding, Soviet troops cleared streets, searched apartment houses, checked identity papers, and arrested suspicious individuals. Soviet tanks replied even to single shots from snipers in buildings by firing pointblank until the building collapsed, bringing down its upper floors and, presumably, the sniper as well. Streets which housed substantial nests of insurgents received the same treatment. Invariably moving in groups, Soviet tanks often fired indiscriminately at windows, doorways, or passers-by, hoping to check the use of gasoline bombs. Other Soviet tanks provided support for infantry.

The Soviets also used several hundred heavy artillery pieces, stationing them in two groups, one in the suburbs and the other on Gellért Hill, which rises 770 feet above the city. Their fire was directed toward such targets as the Kilián barracks and various insurgent positions in the hills of Buda. Soviet aircraft appeared over Budapest, but it is doubtful that they actually bombed the city.⁸⁴

Soviets Take Over Functions of Government

Despite the fact that resistance was strongest among factory workers and other proletarians, Kádár and the Russians stuck to their claim that the uprising was a capitalist plot. Kádár's repeated appeals to Hungarian workers to stop fighting and return to work had

no discernible effect: his government had neither army, police, nor bureaucracy and clearly relied entirely on Soviet power.

The Soviets underscored this by issuing orders and proclamations directly to the Hungarian people, ignoring even the pretense of Hungarian sovereignty. Their orders dealt with the collection of arms, the curfew imposed on Budapest and other cities, the prohibition of all public meetings, the distribution of food, the continued service of public utilities, and the end of strikes—in short, with the maintenance of health and order. Soviet troops took over all utilities, communications, and transportation facilities and issued permits for the movement of motor vehicles. They also summarily executed certain insurgents, in areas of heavy fighting, to terrorize the people.⁸⁵

Soviets "Cool Off" the Situation by Deporting Possible Insurgents

As the fighting died down by mid-November, the Soviets moved to consolidate their military victory by the mass deportation of possible dissidents. The process was crude enough: a street or apartment house complex was surrounded and sealed off, the buildings searched, and men between approximately 17 and 40 years of age were rounded up, trucked to improvised assembly areas, and then, after brief questioning, shipped to the Soviet Union. Some young women were also deported. No precise count of the deported is available, but it certainly ran into the tens of thousands. Most deportees were from Budapest. Initially, almost all deportees were moved through Záhony on the Russian border in guarded trains composed of freight or cattle cars with 30 to 70 persons per car. This route was easily traced because many deportees threw out notes, and a few trains were attacked by insurgent groups. The Soviets therefore began to use trucks, moving in convoy, through northeastern Hungary directly into the Soviet Union.

Some deportees, especially those seized by the AVO, were beaten or otherwise maltreated, but this was not typical. On the whole, Soviet captors behaved properly and the questioning which the deportees underwent in the Soviet prisons (apparently none were sent to labor camps) was directed not at self-incrimination, but at ascertaining the reasons for the uprising and its success.

The main reason for deportation appears to have been not punishment, but prevention. Since the students and young workers of Budapest had been the very backbone of the uprising, why not remove them from Hungary until order could be restored? The deportations were also used as a means of applying pressure, (if unsuccessfully, on the workers: deportations would end when the general strike was called off. Most of the deportees returned home in early 1957.⁸⁶

The political effects of the deportations were broadened by the "voluntary deportations," in which some 193,000 Hungarians fled to Yugoslavia and, above all, to Austria. The flight began on a large scale around mid-November and continued into January 1957. An exodus on such a

scale, funneling by bus, train, truck, and on foot into a relatively narrow area of the Austrian frontier, could certainly have been halted, or at least sharply restricted, especially since most of the refugees were easily recognizable as young city-dwellers, had the Kádár government decided to act. But by allowing this safety valve to potential troublemakers, Kádár may have hoped to avert further trouble in the future. Thus, by one means or another, the most aggressive, anti-Communist elements in Hungarian society were removed from the political scene.⁸⁷

Measures To Control the Army and Re-establish the AVO

The Hungarian army, which had proved unreliable from the Communist viewpoint, was treated as a potentially dangerous group. In late 1956 and early 1957, its size was greatly reduced. Officers were very carefully screened; perhaps 80 percent were dismissed and some were imprisoned. No conscripts were inducted until the spring of 1957 to compensate for those completing their time in the service, and the army's strength was allowed to decline to between 25,000 and 40,000. Even then, recruits were given careful political screening and the army's strength was held to 100,000. Political officers and Soviet military advisers kept careful watch over the new army, whose ammunition and fuel supplies were restricted, as were its heavy weapons.⁸⁸

The Kádár government also re-established the secret police, renaming it the "Political Investigation Division." Most of the AVO officers, excluding some of the more notorious, joined the new force. It also contained armed units on permanent alert, to patrol the streets, protect government buildings, and smash riots or demonstrations. Until mid-1957, the "new" police used the methods of their predecessors.⁸⁹

Kádár Moves Against the Revolutionary and Workers' Councils

Along with creating reliable security organs, the Kádár government's primary concern was to establish its authority throughout the country by smashing the various revolutionary councils in town halls, government offices, police stations, newspaper plants, and other key points. This was done with relative ease; the councils had no real weapon to use against the Soviet troops sent to dispossess or arrest them. By mid-November, therefore, Kádár could begin to take over the administrative tasks of normal, day-to-day government from the Soviet army.

Kádár now turned his attention to destroying the workers' councils, which exercised leadership of the workers and control over the factories, thus ensuring continuation of the general strike. Although wageless workers might eventually be brought to heel by cold and hunger, Kádár could not afford to wait. So long as the general strike continued, so long as idle and angry men glared at Soviet patrols, so long as each factory council had a secret arms cache, the possibility of a new explosion remained a threat. Initially, Kádár apparently hoped to conciliate the workers; but their demands, which amounted to nothing less than a reassertion of the achievements of the uprising, were totally unacceptable.

By late November, cracks began to appear in the solid wall presented by the workers' councils. Those in the capital, grouped in the Workers' Council of Greater Budapest, urged conciliation, arguing that, unless Kádár showed some successes, he could not extract any concessions from the Soviets. Moreover, if he failed, might not the Soviets bring back Gerő, or even Rákosi? The councils in the provinces disagreed, advocating a firm, irreconcilable policy: continue the general strike until doomsday, if necessary. These differences, accentuated by the increasing misery of the workers, gave Kádár his opportunity, and, after incessant propaganda, harassment, and intimidation, he was able to break up the Budapest workers' councils in mid-December, imprisoning their leaders and ending their strike. The provinces soon came to heel.⁸⁰

OUTCOME AND CONCLUSIONS

Mopping-up operations against the insurgents and dissenters of every type took place during 1957 and early 1958. Arrest, jail, execution: the pattern was familiar. Nagy, who had been abducted by Soviet troops after leaving the Yugoslav embassy on November 22 under a safe-conduct signed, presumably sincerely, by Kádár, was tried and executed in June 1958. This was also the fate of General Maléter. Tildy received a stiff prison sentence. Many Soviet troops were withdrawn, but, as of 1960, a garrison of some 37,000 still remained within easy striking distance of Budapest and other potential trouble spots.⁸¹

Kádár Eases Restrictions on Ordinary Living Patterns

Nevertheless, Kádár was no Rákosi. As the political situation became stabilized, a certain "liberalization" set in. Arbitrary and indiscriminate arrests became rarer as the government tried to prevent the police from behaving like the AVO. The ordinary citizen had little to fear so long as he avoided politics. Even intellectuals, particularly artists and musicians—writers were a more dangerous breed—gained some leeway in which to follow their particular bent. Many political prisoners were amnestied in 1959, 1960, and 1963. Hungarians were allowed to go abroad, and some 40,000 traveled to the West in 1963. Western fiction, plays, and movies became easily available, as did personal (but not political) freedom for most Hungarians. Production no longer meant fantastic schemes for making Hungary a great manufacturer of steel, but rather, refrigerators and television sets for some, shoes and coffee with whipped cream for all. Rationality, patience, and common sense became economic, and even political, bywords.

The change was typified in Kádár's revision of an old saw to a new motto: "He who is not against us, is with us." Under these circumstances, it seems fair to say that Hungary by 1965 had fewer restrictions on the daily life of the average citizen than any other European satellite country except Poland, and that, in the absence of any international conflict to upset the status quo in Central Europe, the likelihood of further disorder appears remote.⁸²

A Review of the Hungarian Revolution

The Hungarian revolution is an anomaly in the long list of political upheavals which have occurred since 1945. It began, not in a backward, underdeveloped nation in a remote corner of the world, but in the very heart of Europe. And within Hungary, its center was not in the distant provinces, where the power of government begins to thin out, but on the streets of the capital city. Hence its triumph was immediate and far reaching; the long march from the backwoods to the president's office, so familiar in Cuba and China, never became necessary. By the same token, the revolution had few organizational or psychological resources in the provinces, on which it could fall back if necessary. Its tentacles grew limp after the first substantial Soviet blow to its political brain.

Moreover, the revolution was utterly spontaneous and unplanned. There was no evidence of secret organizations, of conspirators busily extending their clandestine network, of armies and security forces being subverted and corrupted. Instead, there was a great explosion of popular emotion and hatred, felt to some degree by every segment of the population--excepting only the secret police and the very top rungs of the bureaucracy--against leaders who had lost, in some cases the self-confidence, in others the perceptiveness, to deal with such a situation.

The causes of this explosion had nothing to do with the dissatisfaction of the economically underprivileged, or that of ethnic or religious minorities, or of peasants in a society run by townspeople. Nor was the revolution primarily, at least when it began, a struggle for national independence and against Soviet control: a "Polish" solution would probably have been acceptable to most of the revolutionary leaders in its first days. Rather, the causes were essentially psychological, the outburst of a people whose government had systematically violated their most cherished ideals, bullied them incessantly, goaded them toward unattainable and unsatisfying goals, and simultaneously shown itself to be corrupt and incompetent, unable even to build a city-wide Budapest subway. De-Stalinization cast a spotlight on the faults of this group of social engineers run wild, and thus destroyed every shred of their legitimacy. That a successful revolution could then occur suggests in turn that, despite its monopoly of all the levers of power, a totalitarian system requires, as does a democratic one, a certain degree of unity and of belief in its own mission. And this was clearly lacking in the Hungarian case.

The Nature of Soviet Operations in Retrospect

Certain lessons for the counterinsurgent were also explicit in the Hungarian situation. During the first phase of the insurgency (October 23-28), the Soviet involvement was primarily political, not military. There is considerable evidence that the Kremlin was by no means unsympathetic to the uprising at first and was glad to see Gerö driven from the office he had held despite certain Soviet objections. Moreover, there was great confusion in Moscow regarding the situation in Budapest, and there were signs that the Soviets were uncertain of the policy to adopt.

Hence the Soviet army operated under wraps. Only a few thousand troops were sent into Budapest; the city was not blockaded, bombed, or shelled; and no reinforcements from Russia bolstered the initial Soviet commitment. Above all, the Soviet troops apparently had a largely defensive role: to screen, shield, and protect the Hungarian government from the insurgent mobs until changes in political policy and leadership could restore stability to the country.

The Soviet army carried out its limited task successfully, although certain tactical errors were made. Tank losses might have been cut through better coordination between tank commanders and the use of supporting infantry. Since apparently no attempt had been made to check fraternization between Soviet troops and Hungarian civilians, Soviet morale suffered. This was especially true because the occupation units had been stationed in the country long enough to gain some knowledge of, and sympathy with, the Hungarian people.

The ever-growing demands of the Hungarian people, however, could not be met by any concessions short of the overthrow of the Communist political system. Viewed in hindsight, the decision to restore the multiparty system and to hold free elections may be regarded as critical in bringing relations between Hungary and the Soviet Union to a breaking point. With the abolition of the AVO and the rebirth of political parties offering different leaders and policies, the Hungarian people would at last be free to express, through the ballot, their deep hatred of the Soviet system.

The second phase of the counterinsurgency (November 4-20) differed quite radically from the first. The Soviet intention now was simple and direct: to smash the insurrection without any delay. In successfully accomplishing this mission, the Soviet army proved the military and, above all, the psychological advantages of massive, overwhelming force. The credibility of the Soviet intention had been weakened by their defensive, indecisive performance in the first phase of the intervention. It was therefore necessary in November to convince the insurgents that the Soviets intended to restore their power at any cost. This was done by a massive show of force and by ruthless behavior at the tactical level. Hence it was not simply irrational brutality which led Soviet tanks to pulverize buildings from which a single shot had been fired, but a belief that this was the speediest, simplest way to crush resistance. This strategy was successful.

As for tactics during the second phase, the Soviet forces took certain important steps even before firing the first shots on November 4. They replaced unreliable troops with totally committed forces lacking any shred of latent sympathy for the insurgents. They occupied the airfields, primarily to immobilize the Hungarian air force and to prevent the arrival of any Western aid. They took over the major railroad and road junctions. Their columns moved across the entire country to surround the major towns. Thus it was easy to attack the insurgents from the flank and rear, and to prevent them from coalescing into larger units. In Budapest, the Soviet troops first attacked and occupied the major government buildings. The Nagy government

was captured or forced to disperse; the insurgents were thereby deprived of all central authority and leadership and could fight only as isolated groups. Having virtually destroyed the insurgent forces, the Soviet army consolidated its victory, mainly by large-scale deportations, which removed the young and rebellious segment of Hungarian society until the revolutionary mood could dissipate. It was an excellent example of efficient counterinsurgent technique, Communist-style.

NOTES

¹ For the Hungarian background, see Denis Sinor, History of Hungary (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1959); and C. A. Macartney, Hungary, A Short History, 900-1956 (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1962). For the situation in 1918-19, see Alfred Low, "The First Austrian Republic and Soviet Hungary," Journal of Central European Affairs, XX, No. 2 (July 1960), 175-203; and Albert Kaas and Fedor de Lazarovics, Bolshevism in Hungary: The Bela Kun Period (London: Fronto, Ltd., 1931).

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⁴⁶ Méray, Thirteen Days, pp. 127-28; Király, "Hungary's Army . . . in the Revolt," *loc. cit.*, 10.

⁴⁷ For texts of these proclamations, see Zinner (ed.), National Communism and Popular Revolt, pp. 428, 451-52. See also, U.N. Report, paras. 67, 70, 170; Lasky (ed.), The Hungarian Revolution, p. 125; Zinner, Revolution in Hungary, pp. 273-74.

⁴⁸ Zinner, Revolution in Hungary, p. 274. A figure of 200 damaged or destroyed Soviet tanks, given by Váli, Rift and Revolt, p. 279, seems wildly optimistic.

⁴⁹ The Revolt in Hungary, pp. 38, 48, 50; Urban, The Nineteen Days, p. 149; U.N. Report, paras. 173-74, 333, 502, 507, 511, 513, 517, 583-84, 587; Váli, Rift and Revolt, p. 317; Zinner, Revolution in Hungary, p. 288, 316; Fryer, The Hungarian Tragedy, pp. 68-69; Fejtő, Behind the Rape of Hungary, pp. 233-34; Michener, The Bridge at Andau, pp. 66, 68; Lasky (ed.), The Hungarian Revolution, pp. 159-60.

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⁵⁴ For texts of these statements, see Zinner (ed.), National Communism and Popular Revolt, pp. 455, 464-67; and The Revolt in Hungary, pp. 42-43.

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⁵⁹ Sándor Szűcs, "The Border Station of Záhony in the Days of the Revolution," The Review, IV, No. 4 (1962), 18-19; Kóvágo, You Are All Alone, p. 202; U.N. Report, paras. 175, 180, 196, 335.

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⁴² Zinner, Revolution in Hungary, pp. 342-43; Váli, Rift and Revolt, pp. 384-86; U.N. Report, paras. 598-603, 605-12, 617-19, 622-28.

⁴³ U.N. Report, paras. 211-12, 717-36; Szűcs, "The Border Station of Záhony in the Days of the Revolution," loc. cit., 20-22.

⁴⁴ Mikos, The Hungarian Revolution, p. 173; George Ginsburgs, "Hungary and Hungarian Exiles: Laws and Policies," Journal of Central European Affairs, XIX, No. 3 (October 1959), 248, 250-53. Of the enormous amount written on the Hungarian refugees, very little has any lasting value.

⁴⁵ Váli, Rift and Revolt, pp. 412, 434-36; U.N. Report, paras. 612-14.

⁴⁶ U.N. Report, paras. 359, 612, 615-16, 621, 634, 782-87; Váli, Rift and Revolt, pp. 395, 436-39.

⁴⁷ Váli, Rift and Revolt, pp. 385-87, 389-94; U.N. Report, paras. 617-21, 641, 643-60; Ferenc Tóke, "Experiences with Workers' Councils During the Hungarian Revolution," The Review, No. 3 (January 1960), 77-88; Miklós Sebastyón, "My Experiences in the Central Workers' Council of Greater Budapest," The Review, III, No. 2 (1961), 41-51; Zinner, Revolution in Hungary, pp. 342-46.

⁴⁸ Zinner, Revolution in Hungary, pp. 352-53; Váli, Rift and Revolt, pp. 431-32, 439-46, 566, n. 12; Mórav, Thirteen Days, pp. 246-68.

⁴⁹ David Holden, "Hungary: Renaissance After Revolt," The Saturday Evening Post, 237, No. 16 (April 25, 1964), 38, 42, 45-47. See especially, "Hungary Five Years After," 12 articles on politics, literature, religion, economics, and daily life in Kádár's Hungary, Survey, No. 40 (January 1962), 78-179.

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- Kovács, Imre (ed.). Facts About Hungary. New York: Waldron Press, Inc., for the Hungarian Committee, 1958. This is a collection of articles describing and analyzing events in Hungary between 1948 and 1957.
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- Méray, Tibor. Thirteen Days that Shook the Kremlin. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Inc., 1959. This is an important account by an ex-Communist, once close to Nagy, who accurately presents the political thinking, assumptions, objectives, and fears of Nagy and those around him. More is implied than stated.
- Mikes, George. The Hungarian Revolution. London: Andre Deutsch [1957]. Mr. Mikes spent several days in Hungary as a television reporter for the BBC and later interviewed refugees in Vienna. His book, sometimes useful, is on the whole rather superficial.
- The Revolt in Hungary--A Documentary Chronology of Events: Based Exclusively on Internal Broadcasts by Central and Provincial Radios, October 23, 1956-November 4, 1956. New York: Free Europe Committee [1956]. Although this is an all-important source for speeches and messages by both the insurgent and government radio, it must be used cautiously: these are excerpts, and important segments, particularly those showing Communist concessions or moderation, are often omitted.
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- United Nations, General Assembly. Report of the Special Committee on the Problems of Hungary. Official Records: Eleventh Session, Supplement No. 18. New York, 1957. A useful source of data, this report is based on eye-witness accounts by Hungarian refugees. It is, therefore, violently anti-Communist and anti-Soviet.

Urban, George. The Nineteen Days. London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1957. Based on insurgent and government radio broadcasts, this is a useful source of chronological data.

Vidl, Ferenc A. Rift and Revolt in Hungary. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1961. Useful for the entire 1953-59 period, this work suffers from the author's inability to differentiate between the various types of Communists (Vidl was in a Hungarian prison during 1951-56) and his tendency to see events in nationalistic terms: the Hungarian people fighting once again, as in centuries past, against alien control.

Zinner, Paul (ed.). National Communism and Popular Revolt in Eastern Europe: A Selection of Documents. New York: Columbia University Press, 1956. This book contains material on the uprisings in both Poland and Hungary and is valuable to anyone interested in relating the events that occurred simultaneously in the two countries.

Revolution in Hungary. New York: Columbia University Press, 1962. Professor Zinner analyzes the uprising from a political point of view. His material was derived in part from interviews of Hungarian refugees conducted by Columbia University. Although Zinner sometimes goes too far in trying for freshness and originality, this is nevertheless a most incisive, imaginative, and penetrating analysis (as opposed to presentation of data, with which Zinner is little concerned) of Hungarian politics during 1945-56.

TECHNICAL APPENDIX: THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A MULTI-AUTHOR APPROACH

With 57 discrete cases* of counterinsurgency to be studied, it became necessary to locate many different persons to do the work. Some of the cases could be prepared by experts within this office; beyond this, outside help had to be sought. University faculty lists were examined; professional and academic journals were reviewed for related work; area experts and academic friends were consulted in an effort to locate qualified persons available to undertake the work. Before anyone was asked to contribute to this project, his professional reputation, background, and publications were checked. A total of 45 persons, mainly from some 14 universities, eventually contributed to the project.

The very number of contributors offered certain research problems. Most of these persons were not acquainted with counterinsurgency as a function or process of government; some did not recognize the word. Although a few had had actual experience in the field, this was generally as insurgents, not counterinsurgents. The contributors also represented a variety of backgrounds, experiences, ages, points of view, and fields of discipline; most of them were not in direct day-to-day contact with this office. There was thus a high degree of real danger that the final products would vary, not only in quality, but in focus. Given his own preferences, an anthropologist might concentrate on the primitive tribes of an area, a political scientist on the theory of its government, an economist on the state of its industrial development, and a historian on the long-range background of events leading up to the insurgent-counterinsurgent situation. In short, it was apparent that, to avoid ending with an assortment of diverse and incompatible studies, some constructive methodological steps had to be taken to guide and focus the work of the contributors and to provide for comparability of effort and achievement.

STANDARDIZATION OF DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

The major means by which the research effort was standardized was through the use of a tool known as "The Information Categories." Created by the editors as a short taxonomic guide, this was a list of 91 categories of critical information on internal conflict, divided into four

*For the criteria used in selecting cases and the complete alphabetical list of cases, see "Introduction."

major substantive sections -- Background, Insurgency, Counterinsurgency, and Outcome and Conclusions -- with a final Working Aids section. There were 20 categories of information concerning background facts, 35 concerning the insurgent situation, 30 concerning counterinsurgency, 12 concerning outcome and conclusions, and 4 on such details as chronology, bibliography, maps, and illustrations.

Each contributor was asked to answer the 91 information categories (listed below) before he proceeded to write an essay on the case. Thus it was assured that, although cases might differ radically, the same kinds of questions had been considered for each and a certain degree of standardization of approach obtained.

Table 1: THE INFORMATION CATEGORIES

Section I: Background Facts

The Country

1. Size of country (compare to a state)
2. Terrain
3. Climate

Ethnic and Social Background Factors

4. Size of population and geographical distribution
5. Ethnic groups (numbers and/or percentages)
6. Religions (numbers and/or percentages)
7. Briefly characterize the familial, ethnic, and social patterns that had a significant bearing on the insurgency (e.g., urban, rural, and regional differences, traditional view towards violence).
8. Rank (1-2-3) in order of importance those factors noted in category 7.

Economic Factors

9. Characterize the general economic situation of the country (e.g., agricultural-industrial-commercial ratio, GNP) and its standard of living (e.g., unemployment, farming conditions, distribution of wealth within state, wealth of people in relation to their neighbors, etc.) at the time insurgency began.
10. Rank those economic conditions that affected the outbreak or growth of the insurgency.

Political Factors

11. Form of government (at the outbreak of insurgency)
12. Major political parties
13. Major political figures
14. Popularity of government (e.g., bases of support, antigovernment sentiment)
15. Antigovernment political groups (e.g., number, aims, relative importance)
16. Role of communism (may be same as #15)
17. Rank the political conditions which especially affected the outbreak or growth of the insurgency.

Military Factors

18. Briefly describe and rank according to importance any military conditions that affected the outbreak or growth of the insurgency.

Other Factors

19. List and rank any conditions not noted above that affected the outbreak or growth of the insurgency (e.g., foreign occupation).

Ranking Between Factors

20. List in descending order of importance the conditions or factors noted in 1-19 above that you feel were mainly responsible for the insurgency.

Table 1 (continued)

Section II: The Insurgency

Form of Insurgency

21. For each of the following forms which are applicable, give, if possible, the approximate dates for such activity, the area(s) affected, and any special features of such activity:

- a. Underground resistance
- b. Overt guerrilla warfare
- c. Insurgent area control
- d. Use of conventional tactics (i. e., positional or large-scale warfare)

Political Phase of Insurgency. Answer 22-28 for each major resistance group.

- 22. Political organization(s)
- 23. Major political leaders
- 24. Political aims
- 25. Communist involvement (e. g., kind and degree, leaders, organization)
- 26. Popular support (at varying dates and places)
- 27. Underground strength and organization
- 28. Underground operations (propaganda, terrorism, etc.)
- 29. Relationships and interaction among political resistance groups

Military Phase of Insurgency. Answer 30-38 for each major resistance group.

- 30. Military organization of fighting units
- 31. Major military figures
- 32. Recruitment, training, and indoctrination of troops
- 33. Local logistic support:
 - a. Mobile
 - b. Fixed bases
 - c. Equipment and supplies
- 34. Strengths (at varying dates, particularly at start and finish, and high and low points)
- 35. Insurgent casualties (if possible, distinguish as to dead, wounded, and missing)
- 36. Strategy and tactics (describe briefly)
- 37. Intelligence and counterintelligence
- 38. Special features (e. g., tribalism, special ceremonies)
- 39. Interrelationships and interaction of guerrilla groups

External Aid for Insurgents. Answer 40-44 for each major resistance group.

- 40. Countries involved
- 41. Date(s) aid began and ended
- 42. Form and degree of aid:
 - a. Personnel (type of work, relation with insurgents, numbers, etc.)
 - b. Supplies (type, amount, how delivered)
 - c. Sanctuary (where, use, etc.)
 - d. Cost of aid (give basis for estimate, personnel casualties, supply tons, aircraft losses)
 - e. Other

Table 1 (continued)

- 43. Effect of outside aid on insurgency situation, both military and political
- 44. International reactions to external aid for insurgents

Ranking Between Factors

- 45. List and rank those features of the insurgency situation discussed in categories 21-44 above that should be emphasized in any discussion of the subject.

Section III: Counterinsurgency

Recognition of the Problem and Initial Response

- 46. Describe briefly (a) the first recognition of and (b) the first concerted response to the insurgency *problem* by the counterinsurgents.

Indigenous Counterinsurgency Forces

- 47. General organization of forces (including tactical troops; police at national, local, and municipal levels; paramilitary units; pro-government political and social organizations)
- 48. Major military figures
- 49. Strengths (at varying times and places)
- 50. Recruitment and training of special counterinsurgency troops
- 51. Casualties (distinguish as to dead, wounded, and missing):
 - a. Military
 - b. Civil administration
 - c. Civilians

External Aid for Counterinsurgent Forces

- 52. Identify the most applicable role of non-indigenous counterinsurgent forces in one (or more) of the following terms:
 - a. Colonial power
 - b. Friendly power
 - c. Occupier
 - d. Dominant area power (e.g., Russia in Eastern Europe, the United States in Latin America)
 - e. Regional organization (NATO, OAS)
 - f. World organization (United Nations)
- 53. Describe their relationship to indigenous forces (e.g., as advisers, leaders, tactical forces, etc.).
- 54. Organization of such forces at varying times and places
- 55. Major foreign figures involved in counterinsurgency
- 56. Strengths (at varying *times* and places)
- 57. Recruitment and training of troops
- 58. Casualties (distinguish as to dead, wounded, and missing):
 - a. Military
 - b. Civil administration
 - c. Civilians

Table 1 (continued)

- 59. Economic aid, including technical personnel, equipment, and funds
- 60. Home country reaction to involvement of non-indigenous forces in counterinsurgency
- 61. International reaction to involvement of non-indigenous forces in counterinsurgency:
 - a. Free world
 - b. Communist
 - c. Uncommitted

Military Measures

- 62. Strategy
- 63. Tactics:
 - a. Field operations
 - b. Airpower
 - c. Amphibious and naval power
 - d. Paywar field operations (distinguish three targets: enemy personnel, POW's, local population in operational areas)
 - e. Other special features (e.g., pseudo-gangs)
- 64. Intelligence and counterintelligence
- 65. Logistics
- 66. Special military problems
- 67. Rank measures according to effectiveness.

Nonmilitary Measures

- 68. Economic and social reforms (note timing)
- 69. Political, administrative, and legal reforms (note timing)
- 70. Offers of armistice and parole; settlement and rehabilitation of active insurgents
- 71. Population management and control:
 - a. Civic action programs
 - b. Resettlement programs
 - c. Control of sabotage and subversion
 - d. Riot and strike control, curfews
 - e. Intimidation, repression, coercion (e.g., collective punishments, reprisals, hostages)
 - f. Other measures
- 72. Political ideology and indoctrination—psyops, slogans, etc.: information media (radio, press, etc.)

Other External Influences on Counterinsurgency

- 73. Describe briefly any critical external influence by powers other than the dominant external counterinsurgent force (e.g., British aid in South Vietnam where U.S. is dominant external counterinsurgency force).

Ranking

- 74. List, in order of importance, the military and nonmilitary measures that were of greatest effectiveness in counterinsurgent operations.

Table 1 (continued)

75. Briefly discuss the reasons for the failure of the counterinsurgent campaign, ranking the reasons according to their importance. Distinguish among military, political, economic, and other external factors.

Section IV: Outcome and Conclusions

End of Hostilities

- 76. When ended; how
- 77. Military situation at end of hostilities
- 78. Political situation at end of hostilities
- 79. Economic and social situation

Political Settlement

- 80. What it was
- 81. How arrived at
- 82. International influences on
- 83. Ramifications of political settlement

Economic Consequences of Conflict and Settlement

- 84. Negative: loss of agricultural and industrial products, unemployment, homelessness, devastation of villages and economic resources, civilian casualties, famine, inflation, breakdown of trade patterns, etc.
- 85. Positive: resettlement, buildup of roads, introduction of outside aid, absorption of minority groups, better division of land, etc.

Other Results

- 86. Describe briefly.

Future Prognosis

- 87. Describe briefly:
 - a. Viability of settlement
 - b. Short-range (5 years) vulnerabilities
 - c. Long-range vulnerabilities (e.g., irredentism, hostile neighbors)

Section V: Working Aids

Chronology

- 88. Give a brief chronology of the most important and decisive events of the insurgency and counterinsurgency situation (e.g., dates of beginning and end of colonial and/or occupation period, outbreak and cessation of hostilities, etc.

Maps and Illustrations

- 89. List any maps and/or illustrations that would be helpful in presenting this short study. Of particular importance for this study are maps showing

Table : (continued)

topographic features and lines of communication at the time of the insurgency
and any available military situation maps.

Reading

80. Cite and briefly annotate the books and/or articles that you believe would best help in giving the reader a clear and more ample view of this particular counterinsurgency situation.

Other Materials

91. Are there any other persons to be consulted or materials that might be used to clarify or amplify this study?

SOME TAXONOMIC PROBLEMS

The Information Categories could obviously have numbered fewer or far more than 31. For this study, 31 was an arbitrary number: It left no great gaps in the analysis and covered what were considered to be the critical elements; at the same time, it was a number sufficiently small that a researcher could respond to the categories within a reasonable time.

The major taxonomic problem in the information categories concerned the matter of specificity versus generality. On the one hand, the categories had to be general enough in nature to be applicable to a wide variety of internal conflict experience in various parts of the world. On the other hand, they had to be specific enough to elicit the type of detailed information necessary to produce a study that might have value for the user.

For this reason, the information categories were framed in as specific a manner as possible while still maintaining their applicability over a wide range of experience. There was considerable emphasis within the categories upon such mundane military facts as organization, recruitment-training-indoctrination of troops, local logistic support, and so forth, and such figures as strengths, casualties, costs, and so forth. By count, there were many more specific questions concerning facts and figures than categories of a highly generalized nature.

Where information categories dealt with causative factors—and thus involved both qualitative matters and personal judgment—it was necessary to generalize. Information category number 7 was one such example: "Briefly characterize the familial, ethnic, and social patterns that had a significant bearing on the insurgency." It was well understood that the problems involved in any such inquiry would be numerous. How could one "briefly characterize"? What was meant by "significant bearing"? Was it possible—or desirable—to separate the "familial, ethnic, and social patterns" from the context of economic, political, and military aspects of a total situation? Complete or even adequate response on some questions was impossible, if for no other reason than time. Furthermore, there was a real doubt as to whether, even granting adequate time and money for research, certain questions could be definitively answered. Under these circumstances, the information categories concerning general causative factors were set up in such a way as, optimally, to gain a consensus of best judgment and, minimally, to obtain one informed guess. Such was the limited but pragmatic position taken in this study methodology.

The categories not only provided for the collection of information or data; they were also a tool for analysis. In each section, certain categories required the exercise of judgment. For example, background categories numbers 8, 10, 17, 18, and 19 all required ranking—of ethnic and social factors, economic factors, political factors, military factors, and other factors, respectively—and category 20 then required that all these separate factors be mixed and ranked in the order of those thought to be most responsible for the outbreak of insurgency.

This simple ranking system had certain advantages for the project. While ranking within categories assured that the respondent had duly considered the one aspect of the problem, ranking between categories forced the respondent to review and qualify his prior judgments in the light of other factors. Nonetheless, it must be acknowledged, even emphasized, that such ranking of evaluative factors achieved a hierarchy of judgments rather than of hard facts. The point is, however, that, no matter what tools are used, non-material research has devised neither laboratory nor testing processes for providing indisputable evidence on or the replication of social science factors.

It should also be noted that this methodology did not provide a "consensus" view. It rendered the judgment of one individual considered to be knowledgeable in the field. That judgment was, of course, strongest where the weight of evidence was heaviest and clearest; weakest, where the evidence was scanty or beclouded. But these problems would also have been reflected to some extent in a consensus judgment. The use of only one person in answering the 91 critical information categories was most fraught with danger at that point where personal bias entered. This potential flaw in the one-person response was accepted, however, because it was judged less of a difficulty than that inherent in obtaining a consensus judgment. The single-person response maximized intuitive insight, and, since it was also subject to proof via facts offered in its support, it became public and verifiable.

The taxonomy represented by the 91 information categories should be regarded as a tool for the data collection and analysis phase through which each of the 57 case studies passed. Its purpose was to ensure that similar categories of information were considered for every case, even though any given case might vary widely from another. In a sense, the information categories represented a crutch. In another sense, they provided minimal direction and maximal consistency of analytic procedures prior to the writing of the case studies.

THE CASE STUDIES

Objectives

The individual case studies written for this and the other two volumes in this series were prepared with the idea of providing, within relatively few pages, an introduction to a unique historical experience in internal conflict. They were especially planned to place the insurgency-counterinsurgency situation within its proper historical perspective and overall strategic context. Although emphasizing the military aspects of the experience, the contributors hoped to show the sociopolitical and economic interface within which military measures were taken and military events occurred. In no sense were the studies supposed to provide an intensive, in-depth analysis of specific aspects of the situation; this was not their function. Rather, the

case studies were supposed to provide an introductory overview and review of what was a historical situation.

Within these objectives, there were varying degrees of realization. Such diverse factors as the availability of documentary sources, witnesses, or participants, and the perceptiveness of the author, or even his ability to express himself, affected the quality of the work. At the least, the articles were supposed to provide a state-of-the-art review of what was known of a given situation; often this was a unique contribution to the field. At their best, they actually provided a summary overview incorporating original and new material, such as that gathered through the use of foreign archives or interviews with key participants. Occasionally, a paper was of special value because the author himself had been a participant in the events he described.

Each case study was reviewed as it was received and reviewed again through any subsequent revisions. When the editors felt it necessary—as, for example, because of their own unfamiliarity with the subject matter or because they wished to double check their own impressions—they sought additional review, both from within the office and from outside sources. Although it cannot be overemphasized that the author was in every instance the final judge of the product and of what was included or omitted from his own case study, the editors did submit suggestions for consideration. It may therefore be of some interest to indicate on what basis the review process operated.

Criteria for Review

Ten standards were set up by which to gauge some measure of worth of individual studies. Six of these criteria were more or less quantifiable and definite—length, format, style, documentation, consistency, and emphasis on military counterinsurgency. Four standards were incapable of definite measurement. These included the questions of comprehensiveness and perspective, simplification and complexity, controversy and consensus, and objectivity and interpretation.

The first six criteria may be briefly described. In length the average article was about 40-45 double-spaced, typewritten pages, although the variation ranged from one of 20 pages to one of 76 pages. Regardless of length, the articles were submitted to the same kind of review and, in the case of long articles, particularly scrutinized to decide whether their additional length was worthwhile.

The format of the articles was always the same. The background was followed by sections describing the insurgency, the counterinsurgency, and the outcome and conclusions, with two final sections for footnotes and a selected reading list. One problem concerning format centered on the fact that insurgency and counterinsurgency activity usually occurred within the

same time phase. This problem was handled in a variety of ways, according to the needs of the situation. Sometimes the story was told twice, with varying emphasis; sometimes it was possible to divide the time period, treating the first phase as mainly an insurgency matter and the second phase as mainly a counterinsurgency matter. The most general way of handling the problem was to discuss the insurgency in terms of how it operated and the counterinsurgency in terms of a dynamic, unfolding situation. Such a treatment had the added advantage of emphasizing the counterinsurgency, the major subject of this study.

Style of writing is a subject on which much could be written. For the purpose of a study such as this, any style—so long as it was clear and informative—was acceptable. In fact, the natural variation of literary style between authors was welcome. Every article, however, was edited in this office, and this process, inevitably, tended to standardize somewhat the stylistic qualities of the various studies.

Internal documentation and footnoting varied widely between individual studies. Those authors who had had personal experience, those who had traveled widely within an area, and those who had written previously on the subject tended, on the whole, to document their work to a much lesser degree than those whose knowledge came mainly through study. The author's field of discipline and his professional background, as well as his personal reaction, also seemed to dictate some variation. The minimum standard accepted for this work was that a general note of sources should be given for each section, so that the reader would have a clear idea where the facts were derived and where he might go to check them. On the other hand, footnoting could become a hindrance by its overuse; in general, sources were grouped and incorporated into a single footnote at the end of a paragraph.

Consistency, meaning the lack of internal contradiction within a study, was carefully checked in the review process. Sometimes apparent discrepancies were merely ambiguities in phrasing. Cases of apparent internal discrepancy were usually reviewed with the author. When this was not possible, the matter was submitted to further research. The originally cited sources were checked to be sure they had not been misinterpreted, and additional sources were used for corroboration. It would be imprudent to hope that all internal inconsistency has been removed from the studies, but a strenuous effort was made to avoid its occurrence.

Emphasis on military matters was an objective of the study, but not at the expense of reality or clarity. If, for example, the situation was primarily dependent on political maneuverings and military means were used mainly to obtain political advantage, it would have been unrealistic to pretend otherwise and less than clear to have written a study on the military measures without explaining their relationship to the total situation. Although this project was primarily concerned with the military response, this obviously never occurred alone and in a vacuum. It was hoped, rather, that military measures could be emphasized without unduly elevating their importance. One of the objectives of the study was to try to show the interface

between military and non-military counterinsurgency and how the one might enhance or detract from the value of the other.

With the criterion of emphasis, which lay somewhere in between those that could be rather easily measured and those that could not, the quality review process shifted to consideration of some remarkably ephemeral criteria.

The matter of comprehensiveness and perspective, for example, involved more a point of view than concrete fact and covered a wide range of questions. For example, was an omitted detail so important that it should have been included? And in whose view? Did the study present a good overall assessment of the general situation and of the role of the various counterinsurgency measures? Had enough time elapsed to allow careful and unbiased consideration of the case? Obviously, many of the cases in this study had occurred recently, and some, notably South Viet-Nam, were still ongoing. The passage of time may afford many different views of what constitutes comprehensiveness, not only in this case but in many others. Yet the project must be finished; its undertaking was a reflection of the need for information on internal conflict, particularly on counterinsurgency, the problem of today and now. The present study must therefore accept these inexorably imposed limitations and hope that time will not invalidate the views of today.

The issues raised by the question of comprehensiveness and perspective led directly into the related matters of simplification and complexity. Every contributor to this project faced a major problem in that it was necessary to present and explain diffuse, many-sided, and complex matters in a few pages without introducing a hopeless confusion or resorting to a false simplism. Although the space limitation implied a need for some simplification of treatment, it was the aim to accomplish this objective through literary devices and to present difficult issues in a simple-to-understand, but not simplistic form. It was, in every case, considered undesirable to avoid complexity simply because it was complex.

The matter of controversy and consensus referred to those situations in which there were differences of opinion among experts concerning some phase of or judgment concerning a counterinsurgency situation. Some consideration of these points has already been discussed. It was the position of those monitoring this study that, in situations where disagreement existed among experts, sufficient time generally did not exist to resolve the problem—if indeed the necessary data were available or the nature of the problem was such as to lend itself to resolution. Those controversies raged strongest, of course, where neither side could prove its point beyond dispute. It was, however, considered desirable that the fact of disagreement between experts be explained and that the position of the author, if he took one, be stated in the outcome and conclusions section, where it would be seen as clearly his own position.

The final criterion by which the studies were individually judged in the quality review process was objectivity. Yet this criterion defied definition and presented a major philosophical

problem, a matter of some epistemological speculation. By what standard was a given thing or idea or conclusion "objective"? On a more pragmatic basis, in such studies as these it was possible that, even where personal judgment was not given, the reader's perception of the case might be determined by the manner in which evidence was marshaled and presented. Again, given the best will in the world to be "objective," what researcher could be truly so? He remained, as do we all, bound by his innate view of life, his cultural background, his psychological heritage, his intellectual abilities. He was also caught in time, bound to some unknown extent by the perceptions of his era. In this dilemma, one may only lay claim to good will. To the knowledge of the project monitors, no one used these articles as a forum for polemic, and certainly unlabeled bias was not knowingly left in any study. Thus one may hope that the studies have attained some acceptable degree of objectivity as measured from the vantage point of the future.

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13. ABSTRACT <p>The present study is one of three volumes in a series entitled <u>Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict</u>. The series contains descriptive and analytical accounts covering a total of 57 cases of insurgency and counterinsurgency occurring in the 20th century. The three volumes are individually entitled <u>The Experience in Asia</u> (19 cases), <u>The Experience in Europe and the Middle East</u> (18 cases), and <u>The Experience in Africa and Latin America</u> (20 cases).</p> <p>The purpose of the project was to enlarge the body of knowledge about insurgency and especially counterinsurgency by empirical study of actual historical cases. From a sample of about 150 cases, 57 were selected according to criteria governing time, definition, occurrence of military operations, analogy, and feasibility. Persons of academic and professional background were then selected to study individual cases according to a standardized methodology (described in the Technical Appendix).</p> <p>The individual studies were written in a format covering background, insurgency, counterinsurgency, and outcome and conclusions, followed by notes and bibliographic material. The studies have been grouped geographically in three volumes to form casebooks on the subject of internal conflict. In addition, the cases now published plus some further materials collected during their preparation form a data bank for the further analysis of insurgency and counterinsurgency.</p>		

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